Harold Laski, Gardner Rea, Fred Keating, Rockwell Kent, *and* John Strachey
agree and disagree with Robert Forsythe's categorical stand on the subject of humor

NEW MASSES

SEPTEMBER 14, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

America's Stake in China

By Theodore Draper

ROCKWELL KENT

You're in the Army Now

By One Who Got Out

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

IT IS some weeks now since Norman Thomas condemned the Barcelona rebellion and condemned the Valencia government for dealing with it resolutely. Since that time there have been numerous reports, some of them obviously inspired with hatred of the people's front in general and of Spain in particular, which have thrown an unfavorable light upon the course of the Spanish government in dealing with political enemies at home. The New York *Times* has reported that Señor Francisco Largo Caballero, formerly at swords' points with the Anarchists, has made common cause with certain of them against the Valencia government, and planned a barnstorming tour to rally the people of Spain behind his banner. The *Daily Worker* has published the report of the Communist minister of education on why Caballero's cabinet fell. During these recent weeks, the NEW MASSES correspondent in Spain, James Hawthorne, has been inquiring into the situation to learn just how much there is to Caballero's movement, and how the government is meeting the situation. Mr. Hawthorne's article has arrived, and gives a clear answer to the various questions that surround this general issue. Watch for it next week.

Meanwhile NEW MASSES writers (as well as our readers) will be interested to know that Edwin Rolfe, who was one of our editors for some months during 1936 and 1937, is now editor of *the Volunteer of Liberty,* the paper of Americans and Britishers in the international brigades fighting for Spanish democracy. Rolfe writes to say that the staff of the *Volunteer* would like some of our writers to send over special articles. He says "these should not be too long; as a matter of fact, the shorter the better; a thousand words is absolutely the extreme limit." He also requests verse and doggerel "not too involved in syntax or content." Any such contributions should be sent to Rolfe at Socorro Rojo Internacional, Plaza del Altozano, No. 63E, Albacete, **Spain.**

Last week we published parts of two letters from an American in Spain. The same chap writes as follows:

"Reached the front about two weeks ago. Am in the second line. Only one incident of note has occurred. Last week (after weeks and weeks of perfect weather) it began to rain and to rain as if the Atlantic had been stored in the skies and now flowed out. We are in an olive grove in a valley—sleep in pup tents under the trees.

"The rain started just as we went to bed and we all were soon flooded. While we were trying to find whatever shelter we could in our tents, the fascists opened up with their artillery —an old German army trick, to attack in the middle of a storm if the wind is at your back. We lay in the wet consoling ourselves with the fact that we weren't in the trenches, wading waist deep in water and firing with stiff wet fingers, when the whistle blew and we got the order to fall in with full pack. Wet, cold, and shivering, we went out in the storm and packed and dressed and stood by waiting for what would happen. Whenever I read of such incidents in books I always wonder just what the soldier thinks about. Well, this time I had first-hand experience. First of all, you can't think very much at all—too busy wiping the rain out of your eyes, adjusting your pack, protecting your rifle and ammunition. But those thoughts that you do get aren't the kind to broadcast on a Kiddies' Hour. You wonder how are we going to get to the trenches through the sea of mud that spread before us, how would our rifles stand the rain, who would be the first hit, would our line hold, would we be able to hold them if they broke through, etc., etc.

"We stood around for about a half hour waiting and thinking, wet and shivering. Then somebody started a song, the 'Internationale,' and soon we all were singing and in good spirits. Nothing happened. At dawn we unpacked and proceeded to dig ourselves out of the mud and prepare our tents for future storms. Later we learned that the fascists did attack but were easily repulsed."

Readers will be interested to know that the Role of Professional and White-Collar Workers in American Economy is one of many new courses in the fall curriculum of the Workers' School in New York. The fall term opens September 27, and registration is going on now. Catalogues can be had free on request from the school at 35 East 12th St., N. Y. C.

There will be classes in Social and Political Trends of the Motion Picture Industry; Social Trends in Contemporary Literature; Social Trends in European Literature; Social Psychology; Science and Dialectical Materialism; China and the Far East in World Affairs; Labor Journalism; seminar in Municipal Politics. C. A. Hathaway, editor of the *Daily Worker,* is giving a special series of four lectures on Soviet Russia after Twenty Years. A weekly interpretative news survey will be given by A. B. Magil. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, recently added to the school staff, will conduct a course in Historical Lessons of the American Labor Movement.

These are in addition to the regular courses in Principles of Communism, Political Economy, Marxism-Leninism, History, Trade Unionism, and languages.

Who's Who

THEODORE DRAPER, as most of our readers know, is foreign editor of the NEW MASSES. . . . Joseph W. Mitchell is a new contributor whose article on U. S. army life is the more heartfelt because it is based on his own experiences. . . . Alexander Kendrick is a Philadelphia newspaperman who has contributed to our pages before. One of his best-known NEW MASSES contributions was his article a year ago on the R.C.A. strike in Camden, when he successfully exposed the anti-labor tactics of General Hugh S. Johnson. . . . Most of the commentators in the symposium on page 16 are well known to our readers. Fred Keating was best known as a professional magician until three or four years ago, when he surprised his public by playing opposite Tallulah Bankhead in the stage version of *Forsaking All Others.* Since then he has been acting in Hollywood films. . . . Muriel Rukeyser, whose verse we have published from time to time, is one of the outstanding young American poets. A volume of her verse was issued recently by the Yale University Press in its Young American Poets series. . . . Don Ludlow is a western writer who makes his NEW MASSES debut in this issue. . . . James Agee's verse and criticism have appeared before in our pages. He is a southerner who was until recently a member of the staff of *Fortune.* . . . Jack Conroy, who has been an intermittent contributor to the NEW MASSES, was editor of the *Anvil* and wrote the well-known proletarian novel *The Disinherited.* . . . William B. Smith is in charge of labor coverage for the NEW MASSES. . . . Harry Slochower is a member of the staff of Brooklyn College whose critical study of Thomas Mann, Sigrid Undset, and Martin Anderson Nexo was recently published by International under the title *Three Ways of Modern Man.* . . . Clarence Weinstock is the editor of *Art Front.* . . . Rockwell Kent is an old contributor who is as gifted in words as in lines, as his remarks in the humor symposium in this issue indicate.

Flashbacks

"NO, I am not opposed to all war," said Gene Debs on September 11, 1915, "nor am I opposed to fighting under all circumstances, and any declaration to the contrary would disqualify me as a revolutionist. When I say I am opposed to war, I mean ruling class war, for the ruling class is the only class that makes war." . . . Three years later, almost to a day (September 12, 1918), he said to the jury which was convicting him of anti-war activity, "I am accused of having obstructed the war. I admit it. Gentlemen, I abhor war." . . . A year later, September 13, 1919, thousands of I.W.W.'s who also abhorred war, lined the streets of Seattle, and conspicuously did not cheer as President Wilson passed, reading the slogan every man wore in his hat: "Release political prisoners!" Wilson's nervous breakdown followed soon after. . . . This same week commenced the build-up in certain quarters of a Republican President. The Boston police force struck September 9, 1919, against the firing of their union officials, and Governor Calvin Coolidge was not slow in assuming the task of strike breaking. . . . "Germany in Georgia," was the cry of friends of labor, September 14, 1934. On that day Governor Talmadge set up concentration camps to hold textile strike pickets. . . .

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NEW MASSES

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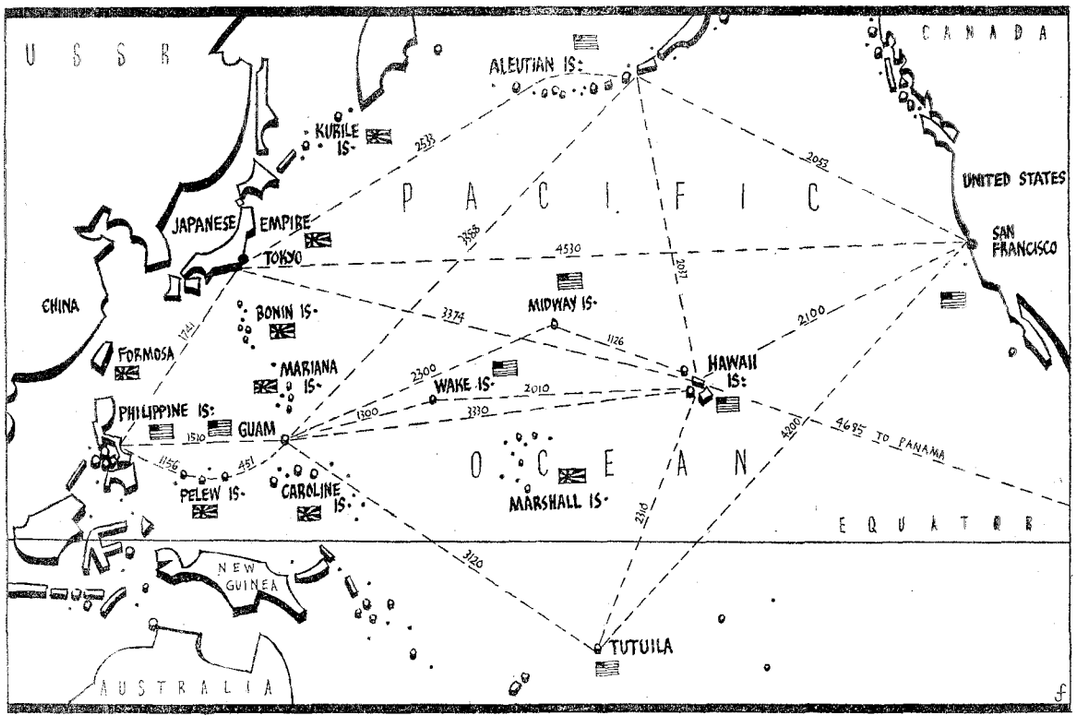

Darryl Frederick

The focal points of possible conflict between Japan and the United States are shown in the above map. America's chief outposts in the Pacific extend along the route of the Pan-American Airways line from San Francisco to Hongkong: Hawaii, Midway Island, Wake Island, Guam, and Manila (Philippine Islands). Other strategic American bases are the Aleutian Islands in the north and Tutuila in the south, the latter one of the Samoan Islands. The chief Japanese bases are Formosa, Pelew Islands, Mariana Islands, Caroline Islands, Bonin Islands, Kurile Islands, and Marshall Islands. Some indication of the significance of the distances between the various points may be gained from a comparison between them and the 6262 miles traversed by the last Soviet record flight over the Arctic.

America's Stake in China

Whether the United States will convert abstract promises into concrete actions is the main question in U. S. policy

By Theodore Draper

IN THE last twenty years the Far Eastern policy of the United States has been characterized by its impeccable abstract principles and impotent positive activity. We have retreated every time in the face of Japanese aggression, though we have retreated most reluctantly. We have continually postponed coming to grips with the real issues, but at the same time we have done our utmost to keep the record clear and our powder dry. Any consideration of the present emergency must begin with an acknowledgment of our strangely contradictory past course.

For example, the State Department denounced the Manchurian conquest as a betrayal of international trust and vowed never to give it recognition. But it put no practical obstacle in the way of that conquest. Throughout 1931 to 1933, American exporters continued to feed Japan's military and industrial machine, thereby enabling her to consummate an aggression thoroughly at variance with the public principles of this government.

Soon after the last war, the United States scored a diplomatic triumph with the so-called Nine-Power Treaty at the Washington Conference of 1921-22. The treaty explicitly guaranteed China's territorial integrity and national independence as well as equal opportunity for all nations in trade and investment. But the treaty set up no machinery to settle or curb violations of the agreement. Without some concrete method of enforcement, the treaty was doomed to failure at the first test—Manchuria.

Unlike Great Britain, this country has rarely tried to put a happy face on this obviously disagreeable state of affairs. Our diplomatic relations with Japan have been correct, but far from benevolent. Great Britain, on the contrary, has traditionally regarded an alliance or understanding with Japan as one of the main pillars of its world politics. Yet, in seeming contradiction to this, Britain has far more to lose in sheer economic interest every time Japan establishes a political monopoly over another portion of Chinese territory.

The Roosevelt administration, like its predecessors, is still hamstrung by this gap between promise and achievement. The Japanese themselves are keenly aware of our unsatisfactory role in the Far East and they are counting upon it to continue. They fear the United States as an ever-present threat to their thrust for monopoly in Asia, but they will go ahead so long as the threat remains merely imminent, never actual. The Roosevelt administration, however, is probably faced with a choice far graver than that confronted by previous administrations. The question arises: how much longer is it possible to postpone concrete action to restore peace and China's sovereignty in the Far East?

A GOOD DEAL of our indecisive policy may be traced to basic economic factors. Our economic stakes in China and Japan are such that various business interests are bound to exert different pressures on the government. This

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is not the whole story, but it is a sound beginning.

For several years, the United States has outdistanced both Great Britain and Japan in total trade with China. The latest figures at hand are for January-April, 1937. China's imports were: United States—$76,131,000; Japan—$70,423,000; Germany—$55,390,000; Great Britain—$45,191,000. Her exports were: United States—$103,095,000; Great Britain (and Hongkong)—$65,847,000; Japan—$44,968,000; Germany—$26,004,000.

The situation is reversed with capital investments. Until about 1933, Great Britain still held the lead. Since then, Japan is believed to have forged far ahead, although reliable figures are unobtainable. One authority places the relative investments in China in 1931 as follows: Great Britain—$1,189,200,000; Japan—$1,136,900,000; United States—$196,800,000. America's portion at this time was only 6.1 percent compared to Britain's 36.7 percent and Japan's 35.1 percent.

Here is an important clue to the basic factors behind America's tenacious support of the Open Door in China. It stands to reason that a country whose economic interest is mainly commercial will be interested in commercial equality. Experience has shown that every Japanese conquest is followed by virtual economic monopoly. Hence, the United States continues its staunch support of Chinese independence and territorial integrity.

Great Britain, on the other hand, has pursued another policy, partially in line with other economic interests. When Japan moved into Manchuria, Great Britain was little moved because its enterprise is mainly in Central and South China. Most American investments were in Manchuria. Aggression in North China worried the British a good deal more, though it is likely that they would eventually countenance it in exchange for an assurance of safety in the South. Now that the war area reaches from Peiping clear down to Canton, British interests are becoming more jeopardized, though Britain is still less interested in maintaining the Open Door than in safeguarding its investments by coming to terms with whatever power is dominant.

Now this factor is further complicated by America's economic stake in Japan. Our trade with Japan is three times that with China. In fact, Japan ranks third in United States exports while China is fifteenth, and Japan ranks second in United States imports while China is but eighth. Furthermore, certain American industries depend on the Japanese market. Japan buys about 50 percent of America's cotton crop and scrap steel and iron. The House of Morgan is deeply involved in the finances of the big Japanese trusts. Certain economic pressure groups in the United States, especially the cotton, automobile, and silk interests, are actively backing Japan.

True, American policy has not been molded by these interests. But it has, in part, been emasculated. These pressure groups have not succeeded primarily because American interests in the long run lie with China rather than Japan, relative trade figures notwithstanding. The Japanese market will contract sharply just as soon as Japan succeeds in finding other sources for her most vital imports—raw cotton, iron, steel, oil, and machinery. The conquest of China is just what will materially lessen this dependence. It is good business for the United States to keep China's vast but undeveloped resources out of Japanese control, despite the short-sighted attitude, from the viewpoint of their own self-interest, of some big business men in this country. Secondly, China remains the greatest potential market and source of capital investment in the world. Its industrialization can be said to have barely begun. The chief obstacle to its industrialization has been lack of national stability. Our present stake in China is but a tiny fraction of our potential stake in a unified and revivified China. Political friendship would be a first-rate business asset.

John Heliker

"What kind of attorney did Tommy Manville finally get? A blond one?"

JAPAN hates and fears the United States. Some time ago, a naval officer, Ikedzaki Tyuko, wrote a book entitled *A Japano-American War Is Inevitable*. The work is studded with passages such as this:

> War between Japan and America—that is an inevitable fate. And even the efforts of both nations cannot avert it. . . . Although both countries see the dangerous abyss before them, they are compelled to advance toward it. . . . The Japanese empire and the Japanese people must remember the fatal inevitability of the outbreak of a Japano-American war which has been on the order of the day for many years.

An army man, Lieutenant-General Sato, published another book entitled *The Imminence of a Japano-American War*, in which he committed himself as follows:

> A Japano-American war is inevitable, and our government cannot avert it. . . . We will not speak about America diplomatically as about an imaginary opponent. No. We emphatically declare that America is our open and immediate enemy. We must regard America as our determined enemy who has heaped insult upon us more than once.

These are the opinions of the extreme "younger" militarists, but they exaggerate only what is in the back of the minds of the most "moderate" Japanese politicians and diplomats. More important is the fact that the extremists are now in actual control of Japanese policy.

What lies at the basis of this bitter hostility? Japan occupies a most anomalous economic position. It depends upon its chief rivals even while it struggles to oust those rivals from positions of power. Japan lacks such basic raw materials as iron and steel, raw cotton, ores, wood pulp, and oil, as well as machinery, and automobiles. The percentages supplied by the United States in 1936, according to recent Department of Commerce figures, were:

Iron and steel (including scrap steel)	52.0
Oil	76.6
Raw cotton	43.8
Machinery	42.3
Automobiles	94.3
Wood pulp	47.3

Now Japanese industry in large part rests on these imports. Without raw cotton, no cheap cotton goods. Without wood pulp, no rayon goods. Without oil, iron, steel, and machinery, no heavy industry and no arma-

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ments. In addition to this, the United States alone buys 85 percent (in 1936) of Japan's raw silk. Without this export of raw silk, Japan would have no funds with which to buy raw cotton here. It is true that Japan, in part, could shift its purchases elsewhere. But then it would have to depend on the British empire for most of these very products, and the price would become prohibitive. In the case of raw cotton, for example, the United States and British India between them supplied 80.8 percent of Japan's needs in 1936.

It would be altogether wrong to assume that the American government has not been keenly conscious of this hostility. In his recent book, former Secretary of State Stimson went so far as to claim that it is almost "instinctive" for Americans to seek "stability and fair play in the Far East" despite "the volume of our trade." In other words, it is almost "instinctive" for America to oppose Japan's repeated assaults upon "stability and fair play in the Far East."

Little do our people realize how delicate is the balance of power in the Pacific. The chief restraining influence is the vast distance between the continents, but even that has noticeably contracted in recent years.

With the lapse of the London Naval Treaty, which set a 5:5:3 ratio for the navies of Great Britain, United States, and Japan, respectively, an ominous naval race has shattered the *status quo* in the Pacific. As early as March 1934, nine months before Japan's denunciation of the treaty, Congress authorized the Navy Department to build up this country's fleet to the maximum allowed by the treaty. Since 1936, the London agreement has been officially inoperative. Since 1934, our naval expenditures have increased as follows: 1934—$297,000,000; 1935—$436,000,000; 1936—$564,000,000; 1937—(estimated) $609,000,000. Our navy is now permanently stationed in the Pacific. The last large-scale naval maneuvers were held west of Hawaii. The lapse of the treaty also opened the way to the fortification of key Pacific islands, hitherto forbidden. Great Britain hastened to fortify Hongkong, and Japan, Formosa.

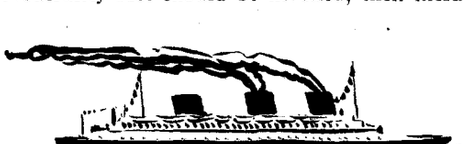
It now takes only six days to fly from San Francisco to Hongkong in the comfortable clipper ships of the Pan-American Airways. The stops are San Francisco, Honolulu, Midway Island, Wake Island, Guam, Manila, and Hongkong. In 1934, Wake Island was placed under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department, and Guam, Midway, and Wake Islands were provided with landing facilities for planes largely under the direction of the Navy Department.

A third indication of administration awareness to the Pacific problem is the national defense program launched in the Philippines under the supervision of an American military mission headed by General Douglas MacArthur. It is planned to build a huge military machine of 400,000 reservists by 1946, by which time the Philippines are supposed to get their independence. Until that year, however, the Philippine army will be an integral part of America's military forces.

YET, despite these indications, American policy remains a bundle of confusing and conflicting tendencies. The action taken by Secretary of State Hull in the present conflict falls considerably short of that taken by Secretary Stimson at the outbreak of the Manchurian crisis. Less than three weeks after Mukden had been taken by Japan, Stimson dispatched a telegram to the secretary-general of the League of Nations to the effect that the American government, "acting independently," would "endeavor to reinforce what the League does," for it "is not oblivious to the obligations which the disputants have assumed to their fellow signatories in the pact of Paris [outlawing war] as well as in the Nine-Power Treaty." Shortly afterwards, Stimson had authorized Prentiss Gilbert, American consul at Geneva, to participate in the deliberations of the League Council.

Two months have already passed since the outbreak of the present aggression and the state department has not yet committed itself to coöperation with any of the other powers. Two formal declarations have been issued by Secretary Hull to date. On July 16, a statement of policy was issued in which this country repeated its advocacy of faithful observance to international agreements and "international self-restraint." But no mention was made either of the actual war in the Far East, or anywhere else for that matter, or of China, Japan, the Nine-Power Treaty, or the Kellogg peace pact. Secretary Hull subsequently issued another statement on August 23 in which the Kellogg pact and the Washington Conference treaties came in for specific mention, but still no mention of concrete activity except for withdrawal of American civilians from the war zones.

These steps are certainly in the right direction, but they dare not stop short on pain of practical impotence. The chief obstacle toward more effective action continues to be the Neutrality Act. Administration spokesmen, like Senator Pittman, are making a desperate attempt to shake themselves free of the act's plain implications. It now appears that the administration gave little heed to the Far Eastern situation during its agitation for the act. Whether the act will shortly be invoked or not, is not essential for an understanding of the administration's attitude. The very delay in putting the act into operation, compared with the speed in respect to Spain, and the numerous alibis, all pitiful in their logic and respect for facts, found necessary to justify the delay, definitely show that the administration recognizes that the Neutrality Act is most un-neutral in its actual effect. If the Neutrality Act should be invoked, then inclusion of raw materials as well as munitions might somewhat equalize its effect.



George Zaetz

War in the Far East cannot ultimately be avoided by ostrich diplomacy in the present crisis. In the first place, the German-Japanese alliance directly links the Far Eastern emergency with the European crisis. America is caught in the cross-fire of two continents. In the second place, Japan's essential problems and hostility for this country would not lessen even as a result of a victorious war in China. There is every indication that Japan would simply become a less satisfied customer and a more formidable foe. The Japanese economic system is so vulnerable that the joint task of subduing China and then exploiting it is quite beyond it. A victorious war will increase Japan's already critical unfavorable balance of trade, force a rise in taxes, lower the already miserable living conditions of the Japanese masses, and give the Japanese military extremists greater freedom of movement than ever. It is extremely significant that a "hypothetical" study of a future war between Japan and the United States by Hector C. Bywater, noted British naval expert, begins with a deliberate Japanese provocation to sidetrack internal disaffection. Bywater's *The Great Pacific War* was written in 1925, and the impending war was placed between 1931 and 1933, but it is well worth reading today.

The upshot of any Japanese conquest is not the solution of any basic problems but rather their more acute development. That is what happened after Manchuria, and that is what is bound to happen again. Under these circumstances, America is in a strategic position to coöperate in the restoration of peace in the Pacific. It possesses a strangle-hold on the bottle-neck of Japanese industry. American economic sanctions against Japan would in no respect upset our economic life to any great extent, while they would materially shorten Japan's ability to fight a protracted war. Should this coöperation take the form of joint embargos by Great Britain and the Soviet Union, it is hard to see how Japan could avoid an internal debacle.

There is nothing in the Neutrality Act which could prevent this country from avowing its anti-war intentions in the Far East as did the Soviet Union. The recent Sino-Soviet nonaggression pact is a model of its kind. It obliges the signatories "to refrain from any kind of attack upon each other" and "not to render any assistance whatsoever, either directly or indirectly" to the aggressor. Such a statement by this country would give tremendous encouragement to the Chinese people. It would make clear that the United States will not again permit one hand to arm Japan, while the other sends verbal denunciations.

Time is of the essence, as President Roosevelt likes to say. For delay will not withdraw us from eventual conflict in the Pacific. It will only drag us into an ever-growing catastrophe. At the bottom, the problem resolves itself into the simple fact that the restoration of peace in the Far East is demanded by our interests both as a people and a nation.

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You're in the Army Now!

And if you think it's fun, read (and weep) this story by a man who got out

By Joseph W. Mitchell

A PECULIARLY satisfying sense of revenge is gained at least once a day by substituting pages torn from army regulations for scraps of discarded Sears, Roebuck catalogues used in the same practical manner as when I was an irregular tenant of Chic Sale's architectural masterpiece. But that is not sufficient retaliation for spending fourteen months as a dogface in our peacetime army. Nothing is, that I can think of now, but this inside story of an enlisted man's life squirming under shavetails' shiny boots and licking them for less money than he would get on relief, will have to do for the present.

Having gained from the army only a smallpox vaccination, sergeant's chevrons, and money, I will attempt to redeem myself with the following story. On a Wednesday, November 16, 1932, to be exact, I swore away my birthright and enlisted at Memphis. After going through two weeks' recruit drill at the Fort Benning, Ga., officers' training post, I was assigned as clerk under the judge advocate, officers' legal advisor.

As a clerk I was supposed to be only a small fiber in the nervous system—line soldiers who carry the rifles are considered the backbone of the army. The effect is essentially the same; most of us come out with about as positive and improved a personality as a mashed bar of laundry soap on a Tuesday morning.

After the first month the routine becomes as drab and commonplace as the uniform, so in reporting the four hundred and forty days I spent as "a John," I shall describe a typical day's activity and identify myself as John.

The time is Tuesday, the last day of July, during a first enlistment. The infantry school detachment, composed of clerks and skilled laborers, is quartered in four 100-yard rows of numbered tents. In Tent No. 40 John is sleeping soundly. Suddenly he is virtually jarred from bed by the reveille gun, which blasts forth each day about thirty minutes before dawn. While bugles echo and the flag is raised, John throws on his uniform, spending most of his time in wrapping the woolen leggings. In all history of dress man has not devised a more cumbersome, ridiculous piece of costume to cover the limbs of man. The war department has yet to show a true photograph of any soldier wearing a pair of perfectly wrapped army leggings. Anyway, after wrapping several yards to further bring out the shapelessness of his legs, John has another problem—what to do with the yards of canvas strip at the end. He wraps and tucks it underneath, secretly convinced it is just another of those daily irritations intended to remind him he is a soldier. Yes, John has learned to growl, like a good soldier.

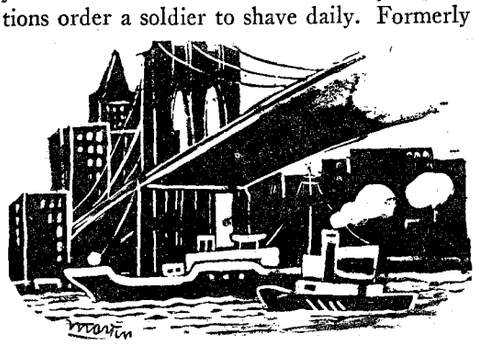
Before breakfast John and his buddies line up at the end of the company street, answer roll call, and begin policing up. "Policing up" is the military term for cleaning up, anywhere, anything in sight that is untidy. The men are divided into squads and patrol the streets under orders of a burly sergeant who yells, "Spread out and get all them ——." Right here we could stir up a lively guessing game among civilians—and still hold the prize, for it would go to the one who guessed "match stems."

John swears again. He muffles his growls, after noting men with twenty-five years' experience stooping for burnt match sticks, and asks a passing K.P. (kitchen police) how they're cooking the eggs this morning.

The match-stem patrol washes up in the latrine and strolls to the mess hall. John is five minutes late because several other "Johns" were ahead of him at the wash trough. The chow line now numbers about a hundred. This is a great time to figure how much his pay will be, how many times he can go to Columbus (nearest town), how much he lost in the last rummy bout, and how much time he spends in line. John figures he is in line about one month each year. He lines up for ball games, laundry issues, canteen checks, practically everything. If John is not doping things out, he will merely wait in line—unless he is in the mood for "shootin' the bull." (The soldier's term is less ornate, but, I might say, more truly descriptive even if more odorous.)

After breakfast John returns to tidy his tent and make up his bunk. The head fold must be turned down exactly fourteen inches from the end, the four corners tucked according to rule, and the pillow done just so. There are several pages of army regulations covering this. Just another militarism you have to see to believe.

Next, John will walk another hundred yards to the latrine to shave. Army regulations order a soldier to shave daily. Formerly the order read "clean shaved," but unfortunately it was revised.



Charles Martin

This is the "cotton period" of khaki shirts, breeches, leggings, campaign hat, and black tie, so John throws on a hat, tucks his tie in beneath the second shirt button *always*, puffs his pipe airily, and shuffles off toward post headquarters. He looks very much like the soldier on enlistment posters, except for the bulging leggings, and feels his existence becoming just about as flat, asinine, and unchanging.

While crossing the parade ground, he automatically salutes four officers, trying to tell himself he is paying respect to the insignia representing the United States but, seeing the suffused pomp with which the salutes are returned, doesn't feel he is successful. So he revels in getting by with any unsoldiery attitude he can, slumping into a plowboy gait after passing the officers.

At eight o'clock sharp John sits down at his desk. Sets of court-martial charges are awaiting routine indorsements. He is not shocked to see that a friend is being "confined at hard labor for six months and forfeit two-thirds of his pay for a like period" for walking across officers' quarters, a restricted area. John shudders as he pictures his friend in the stockade (barbed wire city, it's called). Add army discipline to the prison routine at Alcatraz and throw in the humiliating tasks of street-cleaner and latrine orderly, and you will still be paying a compliment to life in the guardhouse.

John spends the morning hammering out letters and gossiping with the office force, a welcome escape from the strained alertness outside.

AT NOON John returns to his company area and reads the bulletin board: "Laundry from eleven-thirty to one" and "Pay at four-thirty." Beside his own name he reads: "Barracks bag not on bunk." A reprimand from his commanding officer and one night's charge of quarters awaits him after he reports to the major at eight-thirty the next morning.

John is not hungry but he has never yet allowed loss of appetite or anything short of a death in the family to deter him from developments toward becoming a chow sot. Mere eating has established itself as a sort of escape, in addition to mollifying certain aversions about army life in general, keeping him alive and killing time. Yet, he frequently dreads the atmosphere of the mess hall. He knows precisely how each dish will be burnt into sloppy submission, where each man will sit, and the pinched expression each carries, as an

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affliction. He will look up casually and see some dozen vacant stares he has grown tired of trying to analyze. He anticipates the trite chatter and growls over the food. John computes that the average soldier spends about a month each year wailing about some injustice, usually army food, which, in reality, is perhaps the most wholesome feature about the army.

After receiving laundry, John plays pool and reads a magazine in the N.C.O. club, then departs for the swimming pool.

A trained seal would balk at a swim at one o'clock, the time officers allot for enlisted men. The actual discomfort doesn't faze John, but he is vexed at the *idea* of having to change to "fatigues," and after arriving at the pool he waits fifteen minutes to undress. Then a detail of men sees that he takes a soapy shower in an exact manner before entering the pool. There is only one way, soap and wash before putting on the suit, put on suit and rinse. To alter this would break half a dozen rules and be much like slapping the face of the "non-coms" detailed to see that you obey swimming rules, garrison and army regulations.

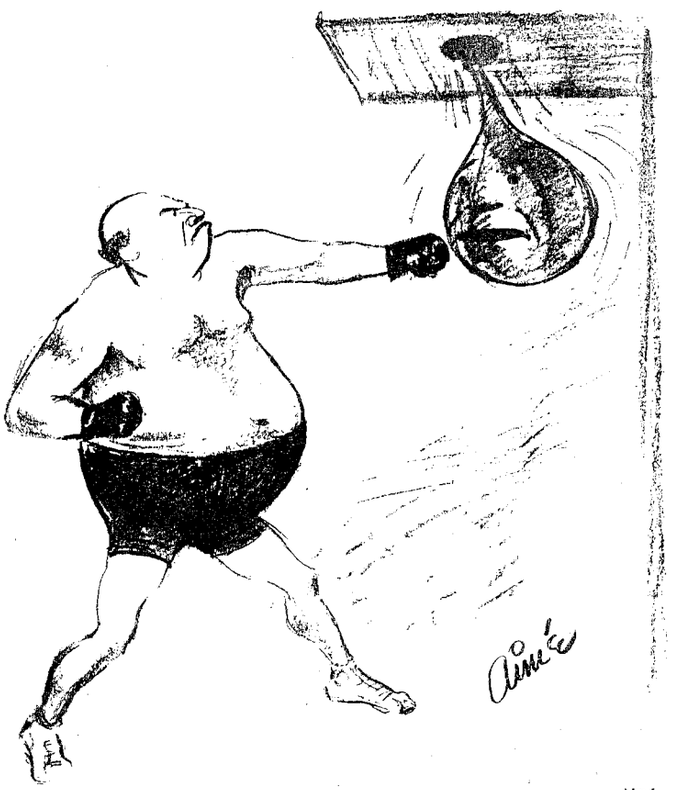
John begins to rinse his feet in the pool, but the guards order him back. They announce that, beginning today, no swimmer will be allowed outside the ropes unless he has a Red Cross button. To get this button John swims fifty yards, dives, floats, and rolls pantingly on the concrete runway at the edge. (They *wouldn't* have sand, for men have been known to forget who they were while lolling on beaches.)

To report that John lost his deep-water button while in the deep water is a slight strain at melodrama but true, and typical of the unconscious blundering of his ilk. And, to hear the caustic advice, "Come out of the fog, soldier," only further entangles the cobwebs. For all the discipline and precision ground into the being of the doughboy, he appears overcome, at times, with a listless groping that fosters to the limelight those trivial lunacies more subdued in a civilian.

John next sidles over to a ball game at Gowdy Field. At least there should be a sane air to baseball. The umpire, a Twenty-Ninth Infantry officer, hands the game to his choice team, and John stalks out toward the library to cool off. Here he gets a grand surprise. The book he wanted is in the library, and no army regulation prevents his borrowing it!

Back in his tent, John changes to another uniform for pay formation. He finds that company bills have eaten up all but nine dollars out of a base pay of $45.90. The army booklets didn't mention that he would have to buy tailor-made uniforms, practically everything issued being tossed aside as unfit to pass inspection.

JOHN is now ready to "go to town." He changes to civilian clothes. Uptown John lets his starved impulses go, and equitably lives down to his reputation. He gets notoriously drunk to celebrate the privilege of not being ordered to refrain from drink, plus the usual reasons. He wallows in houses of ill-repute, because he himself is in ill-repute. He gets into a fight, because he is bored . . . bored and hurt at realizing he cannot bridge the gap between empty barbarism and brimming civilization during one night. A little introspection along this line will allow John to cook up a nice helping of self-pity. Especially if he sobers to the point where he realizes he is en route to camp with an empty wallet, a beery stomach, a prophylactic slip, a black eye, and a headache.



"Take that, John L. Lewis—and that!"

At the military police gate he is unloaded from the bus and searched for liquor. Thus, after the tenth act of undressing and changing uniforms, John, long drawers and all, rolls onto his bunk under four scratchy blankets and ends the "day"—an ordinary one except that it was pay day.

But even at night his sleep is troubled. During the day he has gathered enough idiotic impressions for eight hours of nightmaring. The main theater, for instance. Here he is snubbed into a seat behind the fire break, the front three sections being reserved for officers and their ladies, enlisted men and their wives. Two impressions John will never forget: officers and ladies in formal attire munching popcorn, and the fact that they who live and die within the shadow of the American flag so often never applaud when it is thrown on the screen.

Gowdy Field is another sore spot. The recruiting sergeant never told him baseball and other sports would come under the head of "duty," that he would be subject to absent-without-leave charges and court-martial if he failed to report for a practice game.

Post headquarters are equally distasteful. All orders and the *Daily Bulletin* emanate from there. The *Bulletin* is quite apt to contain such jabs as "this activity being of a light and humorous nature, it is believed the entertainment will be suitable for enlisted men." Also, John knows, commanding officers are conniving to prevent marriages by refusing to reënlist married men below the first three grades, this without support of any army regulation.

And John is constantly reminded that he must give or take orders, rarely able to be himself. The general idea is to be as condescending to those above you as a hardware salesman with an inferiority complex and as ornery as a dyspeptic prison guard to those with whom you rank. That, brethren, is army discipline.

John's sweetest dream is about the time when he can get one hundred and twenty dollars with which to buy a discharge. In the meantime, he tries first a temperate antidote, and then an overdose of poker, billiards, movies, bunk fatigue, reading, dreaming by the radio, study on a special subject, extensive correspondence with the girl friend, and any extra work he can get. The months ahead he can vision rather pleasantly. But the days at hand. . . .

The saga of the dehumanization of Soldier John ends on much the same note as it began —squirming under the heel of a superior officer.

The judge advocate attempted to hold up John's purchase discharge because he maintained John was obligated to train a replacement. (No such obligation existed, according to army regulations.) The papers were disapproved at Fort Benning but approved at corps area headquarters. This approval was accompanied by a scathing letter to Fort Benning officers who had attempted to block the discharge.

So, on February 2, 1934, John became Mr. John, unemployed, quitter, unemployable, or what have you. But he was free . . . free of long drawers and longer leggings, among other things.

What did John first do after arriving home? Why he wrote this story, of course . . . and for many weeks slept until ten o'clock, grew a long beard, lounged in silk pajamas, and never said "Sir" to anybody.

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John Mackey

UNNATURAL HISTORY

This group shows an example of symbiosis which, while relatively novel, may be expected to spread from New York, its present locale, during the voting season. It is generally held to have originated in Delaware in the neighborhood of the Raskob flax plantation or the great du Pont conservatory. We see the right-wing Demoquack (*Copeland regalis*) astride the hybrid striped Tammanican (*Tigris elephantiasis*). The People's Committee on Public Safety has declared both creatures predatory pests and has proclaimed an open season on them. By Election Day, it is hoped, they will be extinct.

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★

Naming the Criminal

THE Soviet Union's note of determined protest to Italy against the sinking of two Soviet ships by Italian submarines has the effect of turning on the light in a dark room. Mussolini of course promptly rejected the Soviet demands for damages and punishment of the guilty. British diplomacy was of course shocked beyond measure. The inspired correspondence from Europe of course saw the proposed conference at Nyon, called by England and France to discuss piracy in the Mediterranean, wrecked in advance by Moscow's forthright action.

Proceeding along the same devious lines which it had followed for more than a year, since the Spanish insurrection began, Britain was determined to enter the conference—and leave it—without any unpleasantness. It was prepared to carry on at the Nyon conference the farce that while it knew piracy was being systematically practised in the Mediterranean, it had no idea who was doing it. And there was the possibility that Mussolini would agree to this mockery of a conference, confident that he had only to push his aggression in a slightly different way, modify it in some slight particular from the rules, for practising pirates to be established at Nyon, and all would be well.

The Soviet action has upset the plan. Britain's customary whitewash of fascist aggression will not be so easy to apply. The fascist and pro-fascist press is eagerly seizing the occasion to make capital against the Soviet Union, turning the question from the central one of fascist aggression in sinking unarmed vessels to a discussion over diplomatic niceties. The Soviet Union's note goes straight to the heart of the situation in the Mediterranean. And that situation will ultimately be solved in the only way that piracy was ever solved, by stamping it out, by meeting fascist aggression with unbending resistance. In this present situation the Soviet Union has clarified the situation to the extent of naming the aggressor.

Theodore Scheel

The Soviets called his bluff

You're in the Army Now

THE chief impression that emerges from "You're in the Army Now" in this issue, is of a life so boring, so utterly empty of stir, and movement, and purpose, as to be unendurable to any mind at all alert. To be sure, this is one man's impression, and a man who was unhappy enough in the army to buy his discharge.

Does the peacetime army really "build men" as its posters claim? Or does it take workers, almost always unemployed, and after a few years turn them out again with less ability than before to get or hold a civilian job, divorced from common life, and unable to find their way back to it, having learned nothing, experienced nothing, with sour and empty minds. Soldiers, Lenin said, are simply workers in uniform. What does the peacetime army, which is supported annually by hundreds of millions of dollars of the nation's money, do to these workers?

"You're in the Army Now" is one of the few realistic sketches of life in the peacetime army which we have seen, and it invites comment and amplification. We should like to hear from soldiers and ex-soldiers. The whole field remains open for exploration; and since the writers have not spoken for them, the soldiers should speak for themselves.

War on Schedule

THE war in China is proceeding on schedule, or rather, Japan is behind schedule. For the Japanese militarists, never cautious in their estimates, should by now have rid the whole Shanghai area of Chinese opposition. The Hopei-Chahar region to the north should have been brought under control. And the government of General Chiang Kai-shek should have been weakened to the point of weak-kneed "negotiations." As this is written, the invaders are instead barely holding their own in Shanghai; a powerful Chinese army has been aided in its defense of the Great Wall passes by Generals Rain and Mud; and Foreign Minister Hirota is reduced to threatening the power of General Chiang—in the press.

The war has already stretched out longer than the Japanese would have liked. It would be completely over-optimistic to suppose that the Japanese offensive has yet made its most powerful bid for victory. But it has been conclusively shown that Japan can expect no walk-over and that a military surprise, which would confound all the prophets, is not even out of question. The Chinese are fighting amazingly well despite the great odds against them, and the war fronts are still just where they started. That is the best guarantee of eventual Japanese defeat.

Should the Japanese fail much longer to advance, its war-crazed militarists will try desperate expedients. Shelling and bombing will become more and more indiscriminate. The cost of the Chinese civilians will become more frightful; American and British interests will be placed in increasing jeopardy.

Cessation of hostilities in the Shanghai area, urged in a note to both belligerents by France, Great Britain, and the United States, is not likely to be fulfilled, owing to the Japanese militarists' arrogance. But it has a wider significance in that it constitutes the first collective effort in the present conflict. As the interests of the other major powers are increasingly jeopardized by the widening Japanese offensive, further efforts along this line may be expected.

Falsely Labeled Goods

THE *Partisan Review* was founded in February 1934 as the the organ of the John Reed Club of New York. "We propose," said the first editorial statement, "to concentrate on creative and critical literature, but we shall maintain a definite viewpoint—that of the revolutionary working class. Through our specific literary medium we shall participate in the struggle of the workers and sincere intellectuals against imperialist war, fascism, national and racial oppression, and for the abolition of the system which breeds these evils. The defense of the Soviet Union is one of our principal tasks." Among the original editors were Joseph Freeman, Sender Garlin, Milton Howard, Joshua Kunitz, Louis Lozowick, Wallace Phelps, and Philip Rahv. Grace Lumpkin, Ben Field, Joseph Freeman, and Granville Hicks contributed to the first issue.

Now it is announced that *Partisan Review*, "a Marxist literary monthly, not having appeared for a year, resumes publication in

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November 1937, in a new format and edited by a new board." It will have "no commitments, either tacit or avowed, to any political party or group," and it will be free from "political dogmatism." Yet it will be not only "experimental" but also "dissident." Moreover, according to the announcement, "To revive the integrity of the Left movement in culture means adopting a polemical attitude towards our contemporaries." The editors are F. W. Dupee, Dwight MacDonald, Mary McCarthy, George L. K. Morris, William Phillips, and Philip Rahv.

The phrase "resumes publication" is, to say the least, a euphemism. A new publication is being founded, and its editors are taking an old name with slight regard for what that name once stood for. Several of the editors of the new *Partisan Review* have put themselves on record lately, and it does not require clairvoyant powers to foresee their policies. They have attacked the Communist Party, the people's front, the League of American Writers, and the Soviet Union. They have been extremely fond of Leon Trotsky, the P.O.U.M., and the Trotsky Defense Committee. No matter what attempts at camouflage may be made, there is no reason to suppose that the present activities of the editors do not clearly outline the future policies of the magazine.

There will be time enough to discuss these policies—if they deserve discussion. The only thing that is necessary now is to make it quite clear that the new *Partisan Review* has no connection with the old. Indeed, it will attack the policies upheld by the magazine which once bore that name and the authors who made the name worth stealing.

Green and Company Unions

BACK in May, when A. F. of L. leaders first declared war on the C.I.O., Mr. Arthur O. Wharton, president of the International Association of Machinists, hinted strongly that the A. F. of L. was counting on support from employers throughout the country. And he wrote to his officers in this vein:

> Since the Supreme Court decision upholding the Wagner Labor Act, many employers now realize that it is the law of our country and they are prepared to deal with labor organizations. These employers have expressed a preference to deal with the A. F. of L. organization rather than Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, Howard, and their gang of sluggers, Communists, radicals, and soap-box artists, professional bums, expelled members of labor unions, outright scabs, and the Jewish organizations with all their red affiliates.

At the time this letter was written, these columns predicted that A. F. of L. hostility

Snow

Company-Union Godfather

to the progressive C.I.O. would drive William Green in the direction of company unionism. The current dispute involving sixteen hundred employees of the National Electric Products Corp. at Ambridge, Pa., would seem to be a case in point. Last June, while the United Electrical & Radio Workers of America, a C.I.O. affiliate, were conducting an organizational drive, the company suddenly signed a closed-shop agreement with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, an A. F. of L. union.

Declaring themselves in the majority, the C.I.O. members went out on strike. A northern Pennsylvania Federal District Court ruled that the closed-shop A. F. of L. contract was valid, but the National Labor Relations Board, after reviewing the case, has ruled that an election must be held to determine the proper bargaining agency. A. F. of L. leaders have joined hands with the corporation to fight a poll of the Ambridge workers. C.I.O. charges filed with the N.L.R.B. state that the company actively campaigned to force its employees into the A. F. of L. union. An election seems clearly called for under the Wagner Act.

There is good reason to suppose that Green will try this same tactic in other situations where employers, who are anxious to check the C.I.O., foster closed-shop agreements with pliant A. F. of L. unions. Another peculiar instance is provided by a recent contract between advertising artists and the New York *Journal-American*. An A. F. of L. local, the Commercial Artists' & Designers' Union, announces the agreement, which is the first formal contract between "white collar" union members and a Hearst publication. Though the closed shop is not involved, it seems significant that William Randolph Hearst, who was represented by the Publishers' Association of New York in the negotiations, should make an agreement after steadfastly refusing to deal with the Newspaper Guild.

Also in New York City, the nearly defunct International Seamen's Union, having lost three elections conducted under N.L.R.B. auspices, is savagely attacking the National Maritime Union. On the West Coast A. F. of L. leaders, who were unable to organize warehouse workers, have called a truck drivers' and teamsters' strike in order to block the inland sweep of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union led by Harry Bridges. This progressive C.I.O. affiliate now finds itself in a "finish fight" with the Federation, while shipowners and other reactionary employers stand by to reap the benefits.

Civilization Plowed Under?

THE International Institute of Agriculture has just issued its report dealing with the world farming situation. Far from being misled by the spotty recovery which has taken place in world trade and farm production, the report analyzes the bases of such increased activity and finds an alarming dependence on artificial, and, indeed, negative factors. Recognizing the part that war preparations have played, the report states: "Although in the end rearmament does not add to the wealth of communities and represents the destructive employment of labor and capital, at the present moment it must be considered as one of the principal factors in recovery."

The war program has, of course, led to a measure of recovery in agriculture; and the frenzied efforts of strongly nationalistic countries to attain "self-sufficiency," no matter how uneconomic or essentially wasteful, have contributed, too. But the International Institute is frankly worried about what might happen if these grotesque props were withdrawn. Thus, "Considering what has been said about recovery's origin, one cannot fail to see that it depends on a very complicated combination of factors that *cannot be withdrawn without bringing down the whole structure of revival*" (our italics).

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Though not using such terms, the report sees the fearful possibilities in the deepening contradictions of capitalist society, for it says further, "On the contrary, far from automatically solving the present problem, it (recovery) sets problems of its own that will have to be solved to prevent an eventual lapse into a state of depression and chaos probably worse than that out of which the world would appear to be now emerging."

Then in discussing agriculture more specifically, the Institute examines policies of restrictive control that have been adopted by certain governments, including our own. Again the report is soberly foreboding when it says, regarding crop restriction: "Such emergency measures rendered necessary by the depression could be referred to only as a temporary expedient and a leveling down of standards of productive efficiency. They could not be continued without putting the whole civilized world in jeopardy and reducing to absurdity the great interests of science and technique."

No one can deny the truth of that judgment, excepting from it, of course, the socialized agriculture of the Soviet Union. Yet here in the United States, recovery and good crops have served only to revive the bogey of "overproduction," and administration plans are going forward to check this "disastrous" tendency. Nothing could better illustrate a capitalist society's total incapacity to distribute the supply of goods that "science and technique" make possible. And it is all the more shocking that these restrictive proposals are the best answer that a distinctly liberal administration can offer.

Secretary Wallace knows, if the general public does not, that land utilization to supply a liberal diet and adequate clothing for this country's population would require a very considerable expansion above 1929 crop acreage—this without reckoning former huge exports of meat, grain, and fibers. Here in America we need the produce of more than four hundred million crop acres at average yields—it is probable that the next Congress will cut this quota to about three hundred and twenty-five million. No doubt Mr. Wallace's program will tend to redistribute the national income to give farmers a larger share—of a smaller pie.

An Early Signal

FOR the first time since May 1936, sales of reporting wholesale concerns in the New York district have slumped below those of the preceding year. According to the monthly report of the Federal Reserve agent, July dollar volume was 8.2 percent under 1936 figures. When price increases are taken into account, this means a sizable reduction in the amount of goods handled. And it is particularly instructive to note the changes from last July in certain important commodity groups. Men's clothing declined 30.2 percent, cotton goods 8.3, groceries 1.4, and shoes 16.7 percent—all items that reflect mass purchasing power. Diamond sales, on the other hand, climbed 50.9 percent.

Closed Shop—Open Union

THE Newspaper Guild was big news last week. The referendum on the decisions of the last national convention was about half completed, and was going strongly in favor of sustaining the convention on all points—affiliation with the C.I.O., favoring independent political action, favoring the reform of the Supreme Court, supporting the loyalists in Spain, etc. At the same time up in Williamstown, Mass., the Institute of Public Relations turned its attention to the Guild.

It seems the Guild is a menace to the freedom of the press. Wilbur Forrest, executive assistant editor of the New York *Herald Tribune* says so, because "for the Guild to inject the closed shop means that, perhaps unknowingly, you will inject into newspaper writing, unconsciously and between the lines, a pro-labor view."

In this view Mr. Forrest more or less concurred with Oswald Garrison Villard—rather less than more, however, for his endorsement of Mr. Villard's blast against the "closed shop" was so enthusiastic as to cause the *Nation's* contributing editor to recoil from his embrace. All Mr. Villard really wanted to be understood as saying was that he objected to the closed shop because of "the restriction it places on the publisher or editor to employ anyone whom he considers fit; and the compulsion it places on every writer to join the Guild whether he believes in it or is conscientiously opposed to it."

The Guild's closed shop does not bar the employer from hiring anyone he wishes; after he is hired the newspaper worker must join the Guild. This is the policy of "the closed shop and the open union." It provides the maximum of freedom for the employer in hiring, but protects the Guild in its right not to be driven out of the field by the employer hiring non-Guild members and firing Guild members.

As for Mr. Forrest's view that a pro-labor attitude on the part of working men and women who happen to be newspaper people is a bad thing, the obverse of this is that only non-Guild or anti-Guild reporters should cover labor. The vote on the referendum indicates that the time is not far distant when it will be rather difficult for the newspaper publishers even to find reporters willing to give anti-labor color to their stories.

That Press Freedom

WHEN an out-of-town paper advertises in New York papers, it is usually for the purpose of impressing advertisers in the big-business center. Raised eyebrows, therefore, greeted last week's full-page advertisements by the Chicago *Tribune* in New York papers, because the *Tribune's* ads seemed directly addressed to *readers,* not advertisers. Carrying the main catchline "Undominated," the ad went on to reproduce photographs of the *Tribune's* Washington correspondents, and to tell how independent they were and how unbiased their stories were. Did the *Tribune* really mean to try to persuade New York readers to take up reading a Chicago paper?

That's what it looked like on the surface, but a closer reading of the text revealed something else. In words that never would have been used with a Hoover, Coolidge, or Landon administration in power, it declared:

> The full power of official Washington is used to suborn and coerce Washington correspondents. The first purpose of a bureaucracy being to perpetuate itself, the aim is to veil the increasing seizure of tyrannical power. To do so the people must be kept in ignorance or suitably misinformed. As the first step the newspaper, informant of the public, must be dominated. . . . Officials squander public funds to distort facts. . . . When you read the news of Washington in the Chicago *Tribune* . . . you get the news which Washington censors would kill or color. . . .

What is the purpose of such advertising in New York papers? Surely not to get readers. Two purposes are evident: (1) to slander an administration elected by a people's mandate (and which, incidentally, is much less guilty of such malpractices than the administrations the *Tribune* supported); (2) far from showing itself to be unbiased, actually to reveal its strong reactionary bias to the center of big business, New York, with a view to selling itself as a prostituted organ to big business advertisers.

How independent the *Tribune* is of playing a political game is revealed by its coverage of the Chicago Memorial Day massacre, when it falsely accused the strikers of opening fire on the police, and when it completely suppressed the eyewitness massacre testimony before the LaFollette committee of Ralph Beck, a Chicago reporter, testimony which made page one in the New York *Times.* Another story which made page one in the New York *Times* but which the Chicago *Tribune* suppressed was Secretary of the Interior Ickes's accusation that the Chicago

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paper had published deliberately false stories slandering President Roosevelt.

All of which reminds us of a story told us by a well-known journalist. Carl Sandburg was extolling the merits of *Time* magazine. Our journalist friend objected, and started going through an issue of *Time*, pointing out its reactionary distortions. Sandburg agreed in every case, and wound up by saying that it was just by contrast with Chicago's newspapers that *Time* seemed to be fair and accurate.

Labor Day Requiem

WHEN dawn broke over Hollywood on Labor Day, the first shaft of light struck a decent grave and a tombstone which read "Requiescat in Pace—An Old Superstition—It Lived Long and Died Hard." This epitaph was no more truthful than any other, for the superstition that "creative" workers find nothing of value for them in unabashed trade unionism had never had any real life of its own. It was still-born, but the bosses had substituted a changeling sprung from their own loins, and kept it alive as long as they could in spite of murderous attacks by actors, musicians, architects, and other professionals.

The changeling died hard, it is true, but the *congé* was given once and for all by two recent vicious blows. One was the decisive vote being piled up in the Newspaper Guild referendum supporting C.I.O. affiliation and extension of categories to include clerical workers; the other was the bull-headed insistence of the Hollywood Screen Directors' Guild on an all-inclusive collective agreement with producers. The producers had raised a plaintive cry that the top directors were the crême de la crême of creative workers, and that they should separate themselves from the lesser fry, the assistant directors and unit managers. Under such circumstances the producers would be willing to talk collective bargaining. But the answer was clear: no divide-and-rule maneuver; one collective agreement for all.

And so the changeling superstition died, and it is fitting that its grave is in Hollywood. Its funeral procession, not quite as mournful as it should have been, was composed of the directors' colleagues, the actors. Five thousand of them marched under the banner of the Screen Actors' Guild in the Los Angeles Labor Day parade.

The Hierarchy Indicts Itself

IT is no new thing for the Catholic hierarchy to lend its support to reaction. During the past year, in particular, it has supported the Spanish fascists. The Vatican itself has all but recognized the Franco regime, has from time to time ostentatiously received and blessed insurgent clergy, and by its silence tacitly approved such atrocities as the bombardment of Guernica. What is new about the "pastoral letter," signed by two Spanish cardinals and forty-six other prelates, is the depth and violence of expression to which the puppets of the Vatican have sunk. Not only is Christian charity a virtue that seems to have disappeared with the first insurgent shot, but a simple regard for the truth is equally lacking.

The statement is one long *apologia pro vita sua.* This in itself is no mean victory for the opponents of fascism, among whom are many Catholics. There is much internal evidence in the letter to show that the hierarchy has been stung in a most vulnerable spot by the opinion of the democratic world. At various points, the prelates go out of their way to take issue with specific critics, especially with some French Catholic publications of the highest standing. Anybody who reads the letter through must be struck with the defensive note throughout.

A large part of the letter cannot be disputed on religious grounds at all, for its substance is clearly political. Communism is arraigned while fascism is given a thick coat of apostolic whitewash. Charges are made against Spanish democracy reaching back as far as 1931, and no attempt is made to distinguish between different periods of the last six years. Yet, every well-informed student of modern Spain knows that a fascist-reactionary coalition, led by Alejandre Lerroux and Gil Robles, was in power from 1933 to 1935, with Franco himself as commander-in-chief of the army. To indict the whole period since 1931 is simultaneously to indict the very forces which started the revolt.

Some of the charges are of such a crudely fictitious character that it is hard to see how the Spanish hierarchy, notoriously the most corrupt in the church, could dare to base an argument upon them. For example, it is alleged that on February 27, 1936 (i. e., one week after the election which brought the People's Front into power), the "Russian Komintern resolved to decree the Spanish revolution and financed it with extraordinary amounts of money." It is also charged that on February 16, representatives of the U.S.S.R. met with Spanish delegates to the Third International and decided to form a "radio post" with the purpose of eliminating "political and military personages destined to play an important role in the counter-revolution."

These are astounding charges. For churchmen to make such charges without an iota of evidence is doubly amazing. Yet that is just what the pastoral letter does. The obvious inventions of a fascist lie-factory, concoctions which the fascists themselves have not dared to circulate, are made the basis for the indictment of a whole government and a whole period. The malice and bad faith behind these charges are obvious. It is a matter of history that the war was provoked, willfully and deliberately, by the fascists. If the hierarchy cannot deny this, at least it will attempt to smear the other side with the same poison. There is a difference, however; the murderous violence of the fascists is common knowledge while the charges against the Communists were based on palpable forgeries, for which no authority is given.

The pastoral letter is as revealing for what it omits as for what it says. It says nothing at all about the massacre at Badajoz where fifteen hundred men at one time were shot down in an enclosed bull ring, nor about the ruthless destruction of Irun and Guernica. The letter attempts to give the revolt a "civic-military" character on the grounds that "the sound mass of the people . . . joined the movement in great numbers."

But it ignores the fact that the bulk of Franco's heaviest fighting has been done by Moors, Italians, and Germans. A movement which embraces the masses would not need such aid. And without the masses the loyalists could not have withstood the better armed insurgents.

It would be entirely wrong to assume that the Catholic clergy, as a whole in Spain, or anywhere else for that matter, supports fascism. Every one of the signers of the letter is now active in the insurgent regions. In fact, the first name attached to the document is that of the Vatican's official "representative" to Franco. Most of the lower clergy and certainly the overwhelming majority of believing Catholics are fiercely opposed to fascism, whether clerical or military. It must not be forgotten that there were only about thirty-five thousand non-Catholics in Spain out of a total population of twenty-four million when the war broke out.

The reactionary hierarchy is on the defensive before the moral indignation of mankind, including its own co-religionists. This pastoral letter, intended as a defense, indicts the signers for their own blindness. It can only further estrange the hierarchy from its own followers.

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"Labor Is the Issue"

Pennsylvania politicians, headed by Governor Earle and Senator Guffey, see the unions determining their future

By Alexander Kendrick

THE United States Senate has often been called the world's greatest social club, but it lacks one club requisite—the blackball. Otherwise, you may be sure, Senator Joe Guffey would by now have been drummed out for his attacks upon those colleagues who defeated the Roosevelt Supreme Court reform plan.

Such a hangdog fate does not square with the conception of a senator from Pennsylvania. That commonwealth, home of the Mellons, the Grundys, and the Pews, has supplied to the Senate Matt Quay, Boies Penrose, George Wharton Pepper, and at the present writing "Puddler Jim" Davis, of the Loyal Order of Moose. None of them could ever be accused of inciting to riot. There seems to be a Pennsylvania tradition that the Senate is simply a branch of Philadelphia's Union League, and it wouldn't do to waken the members dozing at the windows.

Joe Guffey's recent conduct, therefore, his small-boy enthusiasm for everything the President does, and his authorship of the Bituminous Coal Control act, are more than passing strange to Pennsylvania employers who still think the New Deal is a bad dream which will dissolve when the alarm clock goes off. The explanation is not to be found in the salubrious climate of Washington. It lies in the tangle of politics and labor organization back home in Pennsylvania.

Not for nothing does the commonwealth bear the appellation of Keystone State. As events shape themselves toward the senatorial elections of next year and the presidential campaign of 1940, there can be no doubt that Pennsylvania will be a key state in the new farmer-labor alignment which is beginning to emerge from the intricacies of partisan politics.

It is significant that John L. Lewis, head of the Committee for Industrial Organization, has announced that he will take an active part in the Pennsylvania campaign next year when a governor and a senator are to be elected.

Pennsylvania, with its hundreds of thousands of miners, steel workers, textile workers, oil refinery workers, aluminum workers, and other industrial workers, is a stronghold of the C.I.O. What happens in Pennsylvania next year may very well decide whether there will be a national third party, made up of farmer, labor, and all other progressive elements, in 1940.

This is not to say that an out-and-out labor party will take the field in Pennsylvania in 1938. No doubt this could be done and such a party might emerge victorious, since it was labor's vote and nothing but labor's vote that swept the state for the Democrats in 1934 and again in 1936—the only years since the Civil War.

Senator Guffey

Snow

Governor Earle

But Lewis, the C.I.O., and Labor's Non-Partisan League, which is also strong in Pennsylvania, are not quite ready for such a course of action. C.I.O. leaders in Philadelphia frankly told this reporter that the country itself is not ready. It may be by 1940, but meanwhile, say these leaders, a real popular front is in the making.

Its nucleus is the organized labor movement, including both the C.I.O. and the progressive forces in the American Federation of Labor. Its allies are the progressive forces in both the Democratic and Republican parties. The session of Congress just concluded has provided evidence of a conservative-progressive line-up in the majority Democratic Party. Never was this alignment more clearly seen than in the fight over the Supreme Court bill, or, latterly, the row over the appointment of Hugo L. Black to the high bench.

A great many governors and senators will be elected throughout the country next year, and this alignment will undoubtedly make itself felt. Organized labor and Labor's Non-Partisan League will endorse many progressive Democratic candidates as against many conservative Democratic candidates. Probably a great many independent candidates will also be in the arena, but the main fight will be between the opposing factions in the Democratic Party. The results will be illuminating to labor; they will tell labor what to do in 1940. That is why John L. Lewis will campaign as a Democrat in Pennsylvania next year.

BUT where does Senator Joe Guffey fit into the picture? Guffey wants to be governor of Pennsylvania.

As a matter of fact, Pennsylvania is blessed (if that is the word) with a surfeit of "strong" men who intend to figure in the coming events, and have already cast their shadows before.

First of all is Guffey, junior senator from Pennsylvania. He will remain junior senator until next year, when that silent stalwart of the status quo, Jim Davis, former secretary of labor, is ignominiously retired. Then Guffey will become senior senator and will at the same time probably declare his candidacy for governor.

Meanwhile, Governor George H. Earle, who wants to be President in 1940, will step into the junior senatorship, if all goes well, and when Guffey becomes governor, if he does, Earle will move up to the senior place. This would again leave the junior senatorship open. Guffey would then appoint to it the present lieutenant-governor, Thomas Kennedy, international secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America.

Until recently, Kennedy was John L. Lewis's candidate for governor, but it appears likely that Lewis has now swung behind Guffey for several reasons. One is that they have been friends since they worked together on the Guffey Coal Act. Another is that Guffey has won a national reputation in the Senate, while Kennedy has struggled along in the obscurity of his position. A third reason,

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probably as good as any, is that Kennedy is a Roman Catholic, and the day has not yet dawned, apparently, when a Roman Catholic can carry Pennsylvania as the head of a ticket.

In addition to these prominent Democrats in the 1938-40 political picture, S. Davis Wilson, mayor of Philadelphia, also has gubernatorial aspirations, as an independent candidate, but he would probably be satisfied with the lieutenant-governorship.

Two other Pennsylvania figures, who are not candidates for any office, but must be reckoned with in any working-out of political patterns are the rival Philadelphia publishers, J. David Stern and M. L. Annenberg.

Stern, owner of the Philadelphia *Record* (and of the New York *Post*), delights in being known as a liberal, proudly exhibits a picture of Governor Earle inscribed to him, "the greatest liberal I know," and enjoys friendship with the national leaders of the Democratic Party. In 1934, he plumped for the team of Guffey and Earle, and his newspaper was a major factor in their victory.

Since those happy days the team of Guffey and Earle has split, largely over the sharing of spoils and the clash of personal ambitions. Stern has remained faithful to Earle. This split is largely personal. It will not have much effect upon political results, since both Guffey and Earle see pretty much eye to eye on most things.

Annenberg, owner of the Philadelphia *Inquirer* (and of the New York *Morning Telegraph*), acquired the newspaper a year ago, when it was rabidly Republican. He has made it politically a more independent sheet, and it will probably support Mayor Wilson in whatever the latter undertakes next year. In the matter of the Guffey-Earle feud, the *Inquirer* is inclined to favor Guffey, because of its new friendship with John B. (Jack) Kelly, the Democratic boss of Philadelphia and Guffey's man.

This in general is the Pennsylvania picture at present. There may be any amount of shifting before the 1938 elections take place. Indeed, the only thing certain at this writing is that Pennsylvania will be a key state in national politics both next year and in 1940, and that labor will play the most important role it has ever played, in making it so.

As for the Pennsylvania candidates, they cannot be considered ideal. As much is to be said against them as for them, but at least they are in the main progressive and would fit well enough into any popular-front movement.

Best known of them, despite Senator Guffey's recent newsworthy activities, is Governor Earle. He has been in the limelight since the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia last year. He received a twenty-minute ovation when he appeared on the platform, and he led the Roosevelt victory march around the hall with all the fervor of a Yale halfback. Since he weighs two hundred and thirty pounds and is solidly built, most of the celebrators got out of his way and let him have the leading role.

Earle is the man who rode bareheaded in the pouring rain of Inaugural Day last January, and nodded graciously to the crowds, as if it were he who had been elected President.

In quest of national fame, he has several times invaded the South and made chamber-of-commerce speeches; it will later be shown that if Earle does run for President he can expect practically no support in the South.

The governor flies his own plane, and has several times cracked up, but has so far managed to escape serious injury. He is the child of wealth, and not so many years ago was a social darling who was usually described in the newspapers as a "clubman, polo player, and society sportsman." He was something of a playboy, but he possessed an excellent background for political purposes, since his great grandfather was a candidate for vice-president of the pre-Civil War Liberty Party; his grandfather headed the underground railway in Pennsylvania; and his father once ran for mayor of Philadelphia.

In 1932, becoming slightly bored with club life, he heeded his good friend Bill Bullitt (now ambassador to France) and contributed heavily to Franklin D. Roosevelt's campaign fund. He was named minister to Austria in return, and in Vienna began his political education, such as it is. He was a close friend of the slain Chancellor Dollfuss, and on his return to this country he let himself be quoted in favor of fascism. He quickly remedied that, however, when he decided to run for governor, and emerged as a liberal, believing that capitalism is "the only system that will bring real happiness to the American people."

As governor he has had a fairly successful term, in the liberal mold. The last session of the legislature passed several bills, including a state labor relations act, a utility reform measure, a forty-four-hour-week law for women in industry, and improved workmen's compensation laws.

Although he has called out the troops in labor disputes several times, in violation of his campaign promises, he has on the whole been "fair" to labor, and has at least made some attempt, half-baked as it was, toward solving the important economic problem of bootleg coal. A new approach to this problem may be expected by next year, he declares, hinting at state regulation and control.

The chief black spots on his record are in fundamental matters of civil rights. It will be recalled that last spring he prohibited the showing of the documentary film, *Spain in Flames,* in Pennsylvania, because it was "recruiting propaganda for the Spanish loyalists." This statement shows how muddled the man is. He says, for instance: "Communism is the same as fascism, since both impose absolute suppression of freedom of the press and freedom of speech." The censorship of the film has a political explanation, however. Despite the fact that leading Catholic laymen of the state endorsed it, many Catholics protested its showing, although they had never seen it. Remembering the experience of his friend, J. David Stern, with an effective Catholic boycott against the Philadelphia *Record* because of several anti-Franco editorials, Earle deemed it politically expedient to ban the film.

Ralph Martin

Until recently the governor was a director and one of the major stockholders of the Horn & Hardart Baking Co., now involved in a strike in New York. The governor's brother, Ralph Earle, is still a director and large stockholder. All through the strike neither he nor the supposedly pro-labor governor has lifted a finger toward a fair settlement.

But the most revealing spot on the governor's record concerns the so-called "equal-rights" bill passed in Pennsylvania two years ago. At that time the legislature consisted of a Democratic lower chamber and a Republican Senate. Legislation originating in one branch was killed in the other.

Earle was lining up Pennsylvania for Roosevelt's reëlection; it had failed to go Democratic in 1932. The state has a large Negro population. To win the Negro vote Earle concocted a plan to have the Democratic chamber pass the equal-rights bill, let the Republican Senate kill it, as usual, and then stump for Roosevelt on the basis that the Democratic Party was at long last pro-Negro. He himself did not really want the bill passed, as his legislative leaders have admitted. He was not interested in the Negro in any way except as another vote.

His scheme failed to work, however, for the astute Republicans saw through it, and passed the equal-rights bill, forbidding discrimination against Negroes in hotels, theaters, restaurants, and other public places. Instead of signing the bill, and not daring to veto it, Earle pigeon-holed it by sending it back to the Democratic House for "amendment." But concurrence of the Senate is necessary for amendment, as well, and once again the bill was deposited on the governor's desk. He had to sign it.

This is the chief reason why Earle of Pennsylvania is highly unpopular in the South. But the crowning irony is that the equal-rights bill, which may cost him the Presidency, is not even enforced in Pennsylvania, and because of this, has provided progressive Negro organizations with ammunition against Earle.

The chief criticism labor makes against Earle is in the field of administration, not legislation. "He's done a swell job on legislation," declares John W. Edelman, Philadelphia director of the C.I.O., "but there's something wrong with the administration. Although it was elected by labor, it has virtually no labor elements in it. Absolutely no regard is paid to a merit system of any kind. The old spoils system is perpetuated, and civil service has never been given a chance.

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"Lorimer, are we just going to lie down and let the C.I.O. take our right to work away from us?"

"Labor is constantly driving against the patronage system. Now there are new progressive unions in the government field—municipal, state, and federal—and undoubtedly their ideas will conflict with the ideas of the old political machines. That is when Earle's real test will come, in his dealings with the state's own employees, in the line-up of unionism versus politics, and merit versus spoils."

Senator Joseph F. Guffey sprang a full-armed liberal, he thinks, from the forehead of the New Deal. It is rare indeed to see an old-line machine politician change his spots over night, and there are a great many Pennsylvanians who still won't believe that Lord Joseph has done so.

Guffey was once associated with the Mellons, and as Democratic minority leader of Pennsylvania got many a juicy bone from the well-laden Republican tables. Under a two-party system, a great many city and county offices must have minority representation, and the minority patronage involved more than repaid Guffey for his erstwhile obscurity.

Since arriving in the Senate, Guffey's record has been clean in all New Deal matters, and it is quite likely that he will be elected governor of Pennsylvania by an overwhelming majority. But it would never do for him to become involved in national politics, nor can he ever receive a cabinet or court appointment. During the World War Guffey had the misfortune to serve as alien property custodian of the United States, and there are several matters running into the millions of dollars pertaining to the seizure of German property by the United States, which have never been adequately explained. There have been indictments galore growing out of Guffey's regime as custodian, but Lord Joseph has always managed to keep one step ahead of the sheriff.

That is why he is content to let the people of Pennsylvania keep electing him to office, and is not bothering about expansion. He expects them to keep electing him for some time to come.

About Thomas Kennedy, lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania, not much can be said except that he was a Lewis leader before the C.I.O., and his education has failed to keep pace with his chief's. He is simply an old-style labor leader who has awakened to find himself in the C.I.O. While he will never adorn it as a vital force, neither will he hinder it in any way. He'll go along; mark that down for him.

Mayor S. Davis Wilson of Philadelphia, is a zebra of another stripe. He is the complete insurgent, who has never gone along with anything or anybody very long. As a result, while he is fresh and interesting, he is also incredibly confused. But he is extremely popular in Pennsylvania, and his brand of fireworks is a political force to be reckoned with. The mayor is sometimes called S. Devious Wilson in Philadelphia, because of his quicksilver qualities. The city motto is "Philadelphia Manitou," and when Wilson was elected mayor in 1935 this was freely translated as "God Help Philadelphia."

Wilson, too, wants to be president, and that statement is not as naïve as it sounds. Next to LaGuardia, he is perhaps the best-known mayor in the country, is an extremely able politician, and has the advantage of upstate support to aid him in his preliminary quest for the governorship.

Wilson announced his gubernatorial candidacy recently in a row with Governor Earle over the wire-tapping activities of a legislative investigating committee in Philadelphia. The mayor's secretary was one of those whose wires were tapped. The incensed Wilson at once declared himself a candidate for governor on an anti-wire-tapping platform. Undoubtedly a few more planks will be added shortly.

Wilson's election as mayor is still largely an unexplained phenomenon. It came when the New Deal Democrats were at the height of their power. He was elected as a Republican, but only because he was the only man who could beat the Democratic candidate, Jack Kelly. Since his election he has kicked over the Republican traces more times than it would be fair to the Republicans to mention.

Wilson, in a few words, is the eternal taxpayer. Before he became a deputy city controller he filed daily taxpayer's suits against the city, the transit company, the gas works, and the public utilities. He was named deputy controller, thus cashing in on his nuisance value, and shortly thereafter became city controller. From there it was only a step to the mayor's desk. He still orates on the same two cardinal points about which he has entwined his public career—a five-cent carfare (it is now seven and one-half cents) and fifty-cent gas (it is now ninety cents).

Wilson has made much of the fact that he has settled about one hundred and twenty strikes since taking office. He set up a municipal labor board, composed of representatives of both labor and industry, and has, in effect, established compulsory arbitration in labor disputes. Needless to say, this has not really been of advantage to labor, although some Philadelphia labor leaders have seized upon it as the best way to cover their own deficiencies.

In spite of his pro-labor promises, Wilson has not hesitated to use police to break a strike, and only a few weeks ago, when there was a truck strike in the city, went so far as to declare a state of "emergency and apprehension of riot and mob." He swore in thousand deputies, armed them with c arrested scores of strikers for "incitement riot," and in general played czar.

Organized labor is of two minds over Wilson. The C.I.O. is against his attempt to dictate the policies of labor unions, and his obsession about the "sanctity of contracts," even when they are broken by employers. Several A. F. of L. leaders, on the other hand, favor Wilson. He runs their unions for them, which apparently they can no longer do themselves.

Wilson has constituted himself his own National Labor Relations Board and has called labor elections whenever he saw fit. He did this in the drivers' strike at the Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin,* and played direc into the hands of the big, conservative, op shop newspaper. He did it again in the c of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co., though he himself is one of the trustees of th company, and as such the employer of nine thousand seven hundred workers. Following his example, the Navy Department recently ordered a similar election at the Philadelphia navy yard, without the sanction of the Labor Relations Board. In both instances, needless to say, company unionism won, and bona-fide unionism lost.

Whatever the differences among the candidates, one and all are wooing Pennsylvania labor. One and all echo the sentiment of C.I.O. Organizer Edelman, who says: "In 1938, and 1940, too, labor will be the great American issue."

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Is Laughter a Weapon?

Yes and no seems to be the consensus of a group commenting on Mr. Forsythe's remarks

A Symposium

IN our issue of August 3 we published an essay by Robert Forsythe entitled "Strictly from Anger," which was by way of being a review of the book *Strictly from Hunger,* by the humorist S. J. Perelman. Mr. Forsythe's essay was so categorical in its strictures on humor and satire that we asked a number of well-known contributors to discuss it. Their comments follow. The verse parody signed "Victoria" is by a Hollywood screen writer.—THE EDITORS.

By Harold J. Laski

I THINK Mr. Forsythe says both not enough and too much. No socialist ought to be without a sense of humor; it is one of the essential ingredients in a proper perspective of things. And one of the things the movement needs is a really great satirist. A second-rate one would not do, for the simple reason that second-rate satire usually (like most poor propaganda) half amuses your friends and fails to convince your enemies.

But the technique of humor as a weapon of propaganda reaches but a little way. Unless it is ally of the best quality, it tends merely to become "funny"—and I doubt whether "fun" ever did more than provoke the laugh that precedes forgetfulness. Socialist writers ought, above everything, to force their readers into the position of seeing *the kind of civilization we have made as it appears* to people who care about the quality of life. That can be done superbly by the sort of healthy indignation you get in Carlyle or Ruskin at their best; or it can be done, equally superbly, in the more delicate satire of Matthew Arnold or, in our own day, of R. H. Tawney. The picture they paint is recognizable; it compels thought; you cannot run away from it. You have to try and convince yourself that you and your way of life have not come under the writer's whip. You don't easily so persuade yourself, and you are ready for the illumination of positive doctrine.

The trouble, I think, with the "humorists" is that they provoke the laugh in their reader but leave him persuaded that he is not the person laughed at. My non-socialist colleagues adore the *New Yorker;* I have never seen evidence that it occurs to them that the society it depicts is the society they are concerned to maintain. And the trouble with the satirists is that if their savagery is excessive, it misses the mark; it is not accident that we have made a children's fairy-tale out of *Gulliver's Travels*—the most bitter satire, I suppose, ever written on humanity.

If humor and satire are to help socialist ideas, they must be woven into their expression. That, I think, is why *Widowers' House* and *Major Barbara* are great socialist propaganda; that, also, is why *Tono Bungay* and *Kipps* were both of them great contributions to the idea of a world that might be founded on common sense. Humor that centers round the trivial does not drive its point home. Humor that (for fear of the subscriber or the advertiser) dare not make its point too obvious, usually makes for the reader a quite different point from anything the writer intended. I suspect that not very effective satire is usually read by the people at whom it is directed without any sense that it is aimed at them; while too savage satire either, like Swift's, "o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side," or is dismissed as excessive at once. But a book like Arnold's *Friendship's Garland,* or Carlyle's *Past and Present,* or Tawney's *Acquisitive Society* leaves an uncomfortable wound because it paints a portrait, the lines of which form a mirror in which the reader sees himself.

May I say one last thing? I wish there were more people in the socialist movement who would try to state its case with the pungent, plain, common sense of writers like William Cobbett or Tom Paine. To write on a level the meaning of which the ordinary man can see at once; to coin, ever so often, the unforgettable phrase; to make everyday experience the basis for conveying general principles; to bring, in a word, the case for socialism from the heights to the streets where ordinary men dwell—this is our supreme need. We call the eighteenth century the age of Voltaire because he made its wrongs inescapably known to every man who could read; and he used the whole armory of intelligence to that end. Humor, wit, satire, these were vital weapons in his hands; but he used them, in Mr. Forsythe's phrase, at the point where "it is necessary to stick the stiletto in and twist it around."

Peter Verdi

He made all his enemies angry; that was the proof that he was doing his job as it needed to be done. The times require a Voltaire; but he must do something more than arouse laughter in our enemies.

By Rockwell Kent

IT IS ALL very well for that devastating humorist, philosopher, and revolutionary force, Robert Forsythe, to disparage humor: he only *writes* his articles; we read them. We read them and we know. We know—and he does—the *New Yorker* and *The Women* and *Esquire.* That there is something wrong, sour, evil—something that threatens disastrous contamination in such humor—lots of us have realized. And we know—what he has forgotten: one Robert Forsythe.

I used to subscribe to the *New Yorker.* I stopped it because it brought Park Avenue into my house. I have never been interested in animal stories. I didn't like *Black Beauty* when I was a boy. I couldn't read Ernest Thompson Seton's or Albert Payson Terhune's romantic animal stuff. I don't believe that animals have human souls. I can't get interested in Park Avenue or in Pelham Manor or in golf players or country clubs. I am as little concerned and can now be as little amused with what goes on in that world as the French peasantry of the eighteenth century must have been with the French court's playing peasant in the forest of Fontainebleau. That whole world makes me sick.

The effectivenes of every art and every form of art is determined by the quality of mind and soul behind it. Whether you choose to make us laugh or cry, Robert Forsythe, I am,

Yours for the revolution.

By Gardner Rea

THERE IS TODAY, in all probability, more loose writing and loose thinking about humor than about any other subject. Humor defies all narrowing, defies all pinning down. Humor, more than anything else, is *all things to all men.* Its badge, to the sadist as to the village idiot, is laughter. Its applications fill libraries with a vast source of happiness, and its definitions fill me, for one, with a vast weariness. The man, who says humor should be this or humor should be that, is saying a man should be a hand or a man should be a foot. Satire is satire, wit is wit, and whimsy—God help it—is whimsy. All have their place in life, and all are in their several ways worth the doing—and the having. So much for humor—whatever it is.

Now let's see where, if anywhere, lies the basis of the present demand from certain quarters—very well, from Communist quarters—that humor produce *results.* The demand that people be made to squirm . . . and bleed; along with the complementary denial of permissible existence for any other type of humor. The whole hue and cry arises, I am convinced, from a present-tense application of the what-did-you-do-in-the-great-war-Daddy school of criticism. For, make no mistake about it, there's a war on. An undeclared war, to be sure, but what

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wars are ever declared nowadays? The struggle between the classes is under way as surely and powerfully in the United States today as though the D.A.R. were actually out in full cry hurling stench-bombs of *vierge folle* at the barricades. And from the recognition of that fact, arises a special type of thinking. A demand for a special course of action. There is a war on, *ergo* every man deserving the name of man must turn himself into a weapon-wielder. There must be no fiddling around while Rome burns. And at the first glance this all seems reasonable enough, but suppose we take a second glance?

War, as I understand it, is made up of all sorts of concomitants. It attracts—or has forced into it—all sorts of various individuals, functioning in various ways. Only a small portion of them, if I am correct, wreak havoc with sharp or blunt instruments. Some—God help us—even keep up the spirit of the troops. Some knit sweaters, some present vicarious white feathers, some gather peach pits, and some purchase battleships with the schoolkiddies' nickels. All, in varying measure, are winning or losing the war. All, in varying measure, are indispensable. And I'm for all of them: for the Sergeant Yorkes and for the Elsie Janises. Equally.

So we come once more to humor. We come to satire, we come to wit, and we come—God help it again—to whimsy. Who is to say that the man born with a silver pixy in his mouth is to fashion it into a sword? Who is to say that a man whose *forte* is light parody—and whose steel is tempered to nothing more trenchant—must seize a broad-ax and lay on, or else be ostracized from the society of all right-thinkers? Not I certainly; but an increasing number of left-wing critics *are* saying so, and to my mind they're talking through their tin derbies. Mr. Forsythe in his recent article on humor has put himself on record as envisaging the necessity of sticking the stiletto in and twisting it around. And finally sums it all up with:

"If there is a loud scream of anguish, you will know you have written something. If it's hilarious to the people it hurts, it's humor."

At the possible cost of losing the thread of the argument for a moment, yet in reality not losing it at all, I should like to digress to recount an anecdote which perfectly illustrates the above quotation. During the agonizing interval when the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti hung on the sheerest of threads, there used to congregate, in a well-known Greenwich Village speakeasy, the average assortment of Prohibition humanity. One of them, scarcely the typical gin-bibber, was agonized to the depths of his soul by the utter stupidity and inhumanity of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and by a reasoning fear for the safety of both Sacco and Vanzetti. For a number of days he had held forth on the subject—not blatantly, but quietly, hopefully, bitterly, as the crisis slowly developed. And finally the long expected, the long dreaded, happened, and Sacco and Vanzetti were no more. The stage was set. A humorist in the group, clapping my friend on the back, stuck the stiletto in and twisted it around, by remarking:

"Well, I see where they've just bumped off your two pals, Weber & Heilbroner."

To the hilarity, need I add, of all of those it "helped"? And yet, that—despite its complete compliance with Mr. Forsythe's definition—was, in my far from humble opinion, not humor. Mr. Forsythe will pardon me, I know, if I suggest that definitions are not enough. Nor is anger. Nor is the stiletto or the broad-ax. Save in war, or on the operating table. Malignant growths there are, all about us, both human and cancerous, which must be removed. That I grant. But that the knifing of them, and their ultimate eradication, can ever be humorous—that I am in no mood to admit. To a sadist, yes. But the rictus of a sadist is far removed from what I choose to call humor. I cannot, in short, see humor as a weapon.

Let us proceed, therefore, to the next step. Although the more militant critical demand for lethal results is wrong, is the half-realized basis from which it springs to be entirely disregarded? My answer is no. It seems to me that what left-wing criticism is fundamentally demanding—though literally clamoring for something quite different—is not only that our humorists become aware of the social struggle, but that their work, or at least the bulk of it, be built around a definite social content. Later, when the war is won, and all's finally right with the world, there will once again, in the full joyousness of life, be room for pure laughter for laughter's sake, but not now. Not now! And with that—if that's what the critics mean, and if the critics will say that's what they mean—I am in complete agreement. But I refuse to reach for a stiletto.

Many of us, at best, are only bean shooters. A number of us are not even that. And yet each of us, in our own small way, can do *something*. Revolutions are not won by humor—admitted; but to my recollection no notable social change has ever taken place without first having its way made easier by the shafts of humor. Whom men wished to overthrow, they have first made ludicrous. Not that a ruling caste has ever been made funny in its own eyes, or ever could be; but before the eyes of their fellow-men they have been stripped one by one of their mystic regalia, their imagined superiority, their simonized anointments of God. So wrapped, they had stood apart, supreme, untouchable. So stripped, they were shown to be even more ludicrous—and far, far stupider—than the most bumbling of their inferiors. That, the socially-conscious humorist has always attempted, and has in time always accomplished. And to that end *every* humorist should strive today. Which is, at least, what Mr. Forsythe should mean, and probably will, when he rids himself of his stiletto fixation.

As to the misleading fact that razzing of the upper classes brings evidences of gurgling delight from the butts themselves—that should mean less than nothing to any humorist. In the first place, no matter how constituted, the upper classes have always been noted for their lack of perspective. As a rule—except when some vague premonition, or some silly question of social barriers is concerned—they fail to see themselves as a compact group, at all. They are conscious of themselves purely as individuals. They themselves are impeccable; their friends, rather droll; and the remainder of their class, downright silly. And it is the remainder of their class they see in the weekly and monthly lampoons, not themselves. The upper class, as I have said, *never* laugh at themselves. Stupid they are, but not as stupid as that. Just stupid enough to fool the critics.

But why I am ranting at them like this, God knows. And what I'll do without them—for some day, of course, I shall have to do without them—God perhaps also knows. As it is now, life—especially on the Sabbath—would be a dreary thing without the society page.

Perhaps when most things are said, and all things are done, we can save a few of them, don't you suppose? Just a few? To take the places of the bright little monkeys up in the zoo—to amuse the kiddies?

MR. FORSYTHE REGRETS

Mr. Forsythe regrets he's unable to laugh today,
Mister,
Mr. Forsythe regrets he's unable to laugh today.
There are little mouths in Spain
whose gaping lips will never cry again,
Mister,
Mr. Forsythe regrets he's unable to laugh today.

There was hope in the hearts of the comrades who marched in May,
Mister,
There was steel in the hearts of the bluecoats who barred the way
—and as the marchers fled
they drew their guns and shot his comrades dead,
Mister,
Mr. Forsythe regrets he's unable to laugh today.

He had five little brothers born with a darker face,
Mister,
in the heart of the South where "a nigger must learn his place"
—and the world is sick with the smell
of their frightened flesh as it rots in cubes of hell,
Mister,
Mr. Forsythe regrets he's unable to laugh today.

When the dawn of a braver tomorrow begins to break,
Mister,
—when the hungering mouths are fed—and the drugged awake
—when every stooping one
shall lift his head and march toward the rising sun
Mister,
Mr. Forsythe expects he'll be able to laugh that day!

VICTORIA.

By John Strachey

I HAD already read Forsythe's article with a great deal of pleasure. "A sense of humor" has always been one of my pet aversions. But I have been afraid to say so, for fear that people would say that that was only natural in an economist and political theorist! Now the best humorist in America endorses my view!

By Fred Keating

HUMOR is a subtle problem. True, a sense of humor is often defensive, but the moral and social value of humor depends upon its underlying purpose. There is the empty sophistication of the *New Yorker* which is card tricks with words. Then there is critical satire which, as Forsythe says, does not alter the identity of a louse, but on the other hand it does make others realize how lousy he is. Humor as an end is strictly entertainment, but to dismiss its intelligent application as a constructive weapon is to be guilty of the *New Yorker's* flipness. People hat to be ridiculed. I speak as an ex-trickster who late earned his living as a wisecracker, and still I say th subject is baffling. To show you how haywire peopl can go on it I refer you to Max Eastman's book.

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Mediterranean

The sights and sounds of the first days of the Spanish war stamp on the poet's mind more than a visual-aural impression

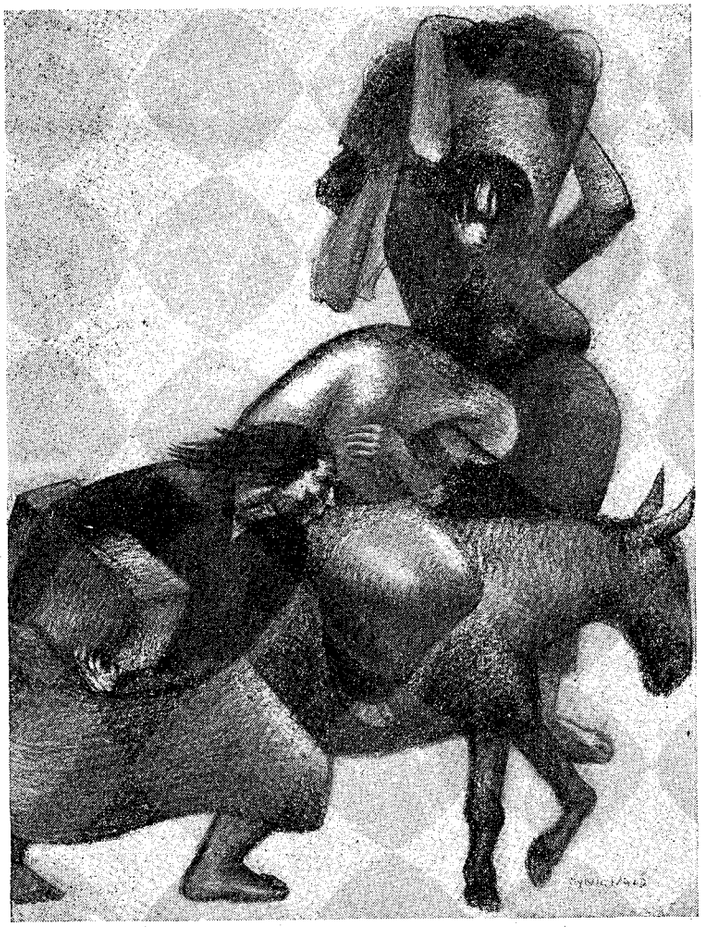
By Muriel Rukeyser

On the evening of July 25, 1936, five days after the outbreak of the Spanish civil war, the Americans with the anti-fascist Olympic games were evacuated from Barcelona at the order of the Catalonian government. In a small Spanish boat, the *Ciudad di Ibiza,* which the Belgians had chartered, they and a group of five hundred, including the Hungarian and Belgian teams as well as the American, sailed overnight to Sète, the first port in France. The only men who remained were those who had volunteered in the loyalist forces: the core of the future International Brigades.

I

At the end of July, exile. We watched the gangplank go
cutting the boat away, indicating: sea.
Barcelona, the sun, the fire-bright harbor, war.
Five days.

Here at the rail, foreign and refugee,
we saw the city, remembered that zero of attack,
chase in the groves, snares through the olive hills,
rebel defeat: leaders, two regiments,
broadcasts of victory, tango, surrender.
The truckride to the city, barricades,
bricks pried at corners, rifle-shot in street,
car-burning, bombs, blank warnings, fists up, guns



Sylvia Wald

busy sniping, the torn walls, towers of smoke.
And order making, committees taking charge, foreigners
commanded out by boat.

I saw the city, sunwhite flew on glass
trucewhite from window, the persona[illegible]ghting found
eyes on the dock, sunset-lit faces of si[illegible],
eyes, goodbye into exile. Saw wher[illegible]umbus rides
black-pillared: discovery, turn back,[illegible]re
a new-found Spain, coast-province,[illegible]-harbor.
Saw our parades ended, the last marchers on board
listed by nation.

I saw first of those faces going home into war
the brave man, Otto Boch, the German exile, knowing
he quieted tourists during machine-gun battle,
he kept his life straight as a single issue—
left at that dock we left, his gazing Breughel face,
square forehead and eyes, strong square breast fading,
the narrow runner's hips diminishing dark.
I see this man, dock, war, a latent image.

The boat *Ciudad di Ibiza,* built for two hundred,
loaded with five hundred, manned by loyal sailors,
chartered by Belgians when consulates were helpless,
through a garden of gunboats, margin of the port,
entered: Mediterranean.

II

Frontier of Europe, the tideless sea, a field of power
touching desirable coasts, rocking in time conquests,
fertile, the moving water maintains its boundaries,
layer on layer, Troy-seven civilized worlds,
Egypt, Greece, Rome, jewel Jerusalem,
giant feudal Spain, giant England, this last war.

The boat pulled into evening, underglaze blue
flared instant fire, blackened towards Africa.
Over the city alternate light occurred;
and pale
in the pale sky emerging stars.
No city now, a besieged line of light
masking the darkness where the country lay,
but we knew guns
bright through mimosa
singe of powder
and reconnoitering plane
flying anonymous
scanning the Pyrenees
tall black above the Catalonian sea.

Boat of escape, dark on the water, hastening, safe,
holding non-combatants, the athlete, the child,
the printer, the boy from Antwerp, the black boxer,
lawyer and Communist.
The games had not been held.

A week of games, theater and festival;
world anti-fascist week. Pistol starts race.

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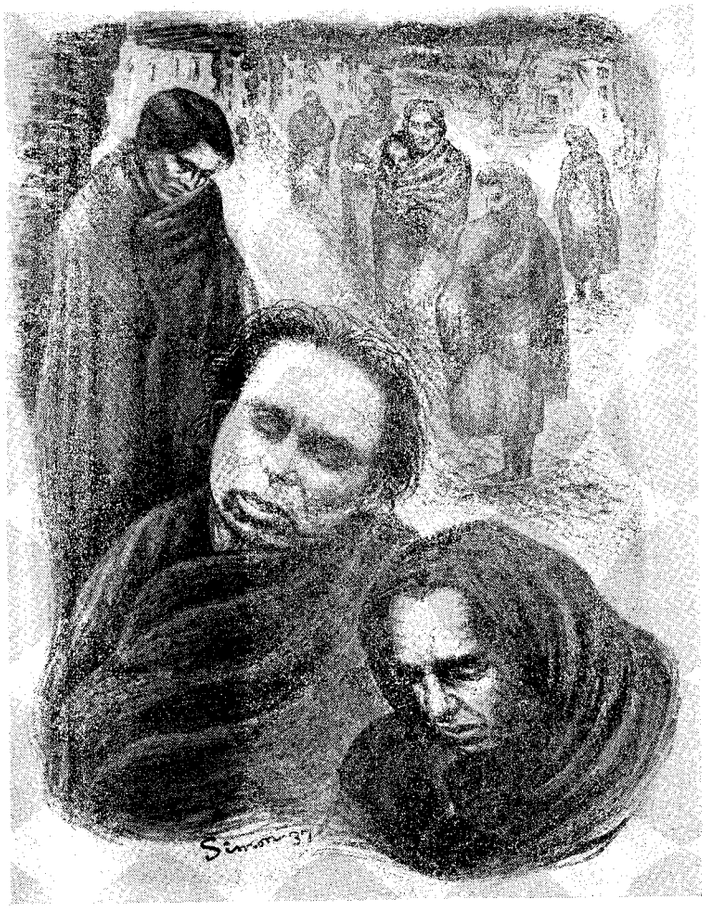

Lithograph by Henry Simon

Machine-gun marks the war. Answered unarmed,
charged the Embarcadero, met those guns.
And charging through the province, joined that army.
Boys from the hills, the unmatched guns,
the clumsy armored cars.
Drilled in the bullring. Radio cries:
To Saragossa! And this boat.

Escape, dark on the water, an overloaded ship.
Crowded the deck. Spoke little. Down to dinner.
Quiet on sea: no guns.
The printer said, In Paris there is time,
but where's its place now; where is poetry?

This is the sea of war; the first frontier
blank on the maps, blank sea; Minoan boats
maybe achieved this shore;
mountains whose slope divides
one race, old insurrections, Narbo, now
moves at the colored beach
destroyer, wardog. "Do not burn the church,
compañeros, it is beautiful. Besides,
it brings tourists." They smashed only the image
madness and persecution.
Exterminating wish; they forced the door,
lifted the rifle, broke the garden window,
removed only the drawings: cross and wrath.
Whenever we think of these, the poem is,
that week, the beginning, exile
remembered in continual poetry.

Voyage and exile, a midnight cold return,
dark to our left mountains begin the sky.
There, pointed the Belgian, I heard a pulse of war,
sharp guns while I ate grapes in the Pyrenees.

Alone, walking to Spain, the five o'clock of war.
In those cliffs run the sashed and sandaled men,
capture the car, arrest the priest, kill captain,
fight our war.
The poem is the fact, memory falls
under and seething lifts and will not pass.

Here is home-country, who fights our war.
Street-meeting speaker to us:
". . . came for games,
you stay for victory; foreign? your job is:
go tell your countries what you saw in Spain."
The dark unguarded army left all night.
M. de Paîche said, "We can learn from Spain."
The face on the dock that turned to find the war.

III

Seething, and falling black, a sea of stars,
black marked with virile silver. Peace all night,
over that land, planes
death-lists——a frantic bandage
the rubber tires burning——monuments,
sandbag, overturned wagon, barricade
girl's hand with gun——food failing, water failing
the epidemic threat
the date in a diary——a blank page opposite
no entry—
however, met
the visible enemy heroes: madness, infatuation
the cache in the crypt, the breadline shelled,
the yachtclub arsenal, the foreign check.
History racing from an assumed name, peace,
a time used to perfect weapons.

If we had not seen fighting
if we had not looked there
the plane flew low
the plaster ripped by shot
the peasant's house
if we had stayed in our world
between the table and the desk
between the town and the suburb
slow disintegration
male and female
If we had lived in our cities
sixty years might not prove
the power this week
the overthrown past
tourist and refugee
Emeric in the bow speaking his life
and the night on this ship
and the night over Spain
quick recognition
male and female

And the war in peace, the war in war, the peace,
the face on the dock
the faces in those hills.

IV

Near the end now, morning. Sleepers cover the decks,
cabins full, corridors full of sleep. But the light
vitreous, crosses water; analyzed darkness
crosshatched in silver, passes up the shore,
touching limestone massif, deserted tableland,
bends with the down-warp of the coastal plain.

The colored sun stands on the route to Spain,
builds on the waves a series of mirrors

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and on the scorched land rises hot.
Coasts change their names as the boat goes to
France, Costa Brava softens to Côte Vermeil,
Spain's a horizon ghost behind the shapeless sea.

Blue praising black, a wind above the waves
moves pursuing a jewel, this hieroglyph
boat passing under the sun to lose it on the
attractive sea, habitable and old.
A barber sun, razing three races; met
from the north with a neurotic eagerness.

They rush to the solar attraction; local daybreak finds
them on the red earth of the colored cliffs; the little islands
tempt worshipers, gulf-purple, pointed bay;
we crowd the deck,
welcome the islands with a sense of loss.

V

The wheel in the water, green, behind my head.
Turns with its light-spokes. Deep. And the drowning eyes
find under the water figures near
in their true picture, moving true,
the picture of that war enlarging clarified
as the boat perseveres away, always enlarging,
to become clear.

Boat of escape, your water-photograph.
I see this man, dock, war, a latent image.
And at my back speaking the black boxer,
telling his education: porter, fighter, no school,
no travel but this, the trade union sent a team.
I saw Europe break apart
and artifice or martyr's will
cannot anneal this war, nor make
the loud triumphant future start
shouting from its tragic heart.

Deep in the water the Spanish shadows turn,
assume their brightness past a cruel lens,
quick vision of loss. The pastoral lighting takes
the boat, deck, passengers, the pumice cliffs,
the winedark sweatshirt at my shoulder.
Cover away the fighting cities
but still your death-afflicted eyes
must hold the print of flowering guns,
bombs whose insanity craves size,
the lethal breath, the iron prize.

The clouds upon the water-barrier pass,
the boat may turn to land; these shapes endure,
rise up into our eyes, to bind
us back; an accident of time
set it upon us, exile burns it in.
Once the fanatic image shown,
enemy to enemy,
past and historic peace wear thin;
hypocrite sovereignties go down
before this war the age must win.

VI

The sea produced that town: Sète, which the boat turns to,
at peace. Its breakwater, casino, vermouth factory, beach.
They searched us for weapons. No currency went out.
The sign of war was the search for cameras,
pesetas and photographs go back to Spain,
the money for the army. Otto is fighting now, the lawyer said.
No highlight hero. Love's not a trick of light.
But.——The town lay outside, peace, France.
And in the harbor the Russian boat *Schachter;*
sharp paint-smell, the bruise-colored shadow swung
under its side. Signaling to our decks
sailors with fists up, greeting us, asking news,
making the harbor real.

Barcelona.

Slow-motion splash. Anchor. Small from the beach
the boy paddles to meet us, legs hidden in canoe,
curve of his blade that drips.
Now gangplank falls to dock.

Barcelona

everywhere, Spain everywhere, the cry of planes for Spain.
The picture at our eyes, past memory, poems,
to carry and spread and daily justify.
The single issue, the live man standing tall,
on the hill, the dock, the city, all the war.
Exile and refugee, we land, we take
nothing negotiable out of the new world;
we believe, we remember, we saw.
Mediterranean gave
image and peace, tideless for memory.

For that beginning
make of us each
a continent and inner sea
Atlantis buried outside
to be won.

Lithograph by Michael Lenson

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She Always Wanted Shoes

And she got them, too, but only after the kind of struggle and defeat which the transient workers in California know

By Don Ludlow

IT was hot in the little cemetery. The heat lay like brushed wool over the parched crosses. It nursed the moisture ruthlessly from the small mound of fresh earth. Nothing moved but the ants and a fly, lost away from the vineyards and the sweet ooze of drying grapes. The man sitting on the ground did not move. His hair drooped over his forehead like thirsty wheat. His gaunt hands were at rest beside him.

"She always wanted shoes," he said.

Forty miles to the east the Sierras were bitter, jagged. West the Coast Range rolled dark, hidden in the smoke screen of hot distance. An ant crawled over the cuff of his blue jeans, searching. The fingers of the man's right hand convulsed and buried themselves in the damp, yellow soil of the mound.

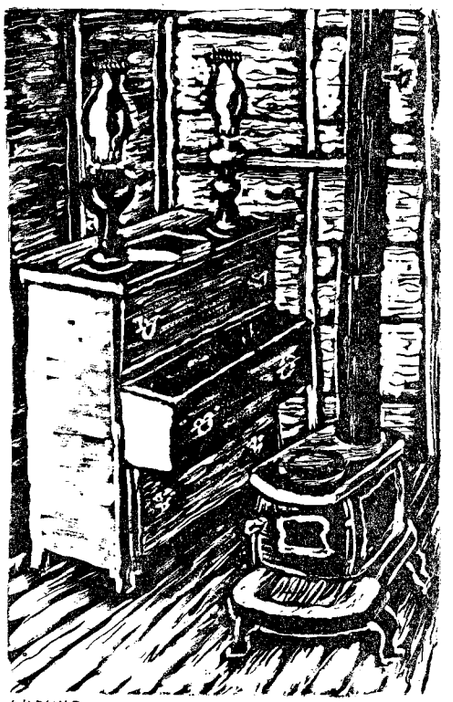
"Even not seeing the circus wasn't so bad," he said. "She was only four then, but she didn't even cry when I told her the field boss wouldn't pay till Monday. She was a good little kid. She asked if we would just take her down to look from the outside—she said she wouldn't beg to go in.

"She couldn't see much, only the pictures, and the legs of the horses and ponies under the edge of the stable tent, but she was happy and laughed and talked about it for a long time. She was pretty healthy then; it was that winter when we went down to Imperial Valley she began to get sick.

"To make up for the circus we took her to a show. There were kids dancing on the stage and she liked it a lot. For over a week she was singing and dancing and trying to turn handsprings all over the tent. She wanted to be a dancer, and asked if she could have shoes like they had if she learned to dance real good. We told her yes.

"After the season was over we sold the tent to a family that was going to stay on the ranch all winter. We decided to quit tramping and went down to Los Angeles and rented a house.

[A number of the ranchers in Kern County allowed non-resident families who had worked for them in the summer to remain on the ranch property during the winter when there was no work. One family consisting of a father, a mother, and little girls, three and four years old, and a baby of seven months, had pitched its tent on some rolling ground near a road, about twenty-five feet from two other family tents. There were no trees in the vicinity. Some hundred feet from the tents a toilet had been constructed by thrusting four tree branches in the ground and lapping burlap around. During irrigation periods, about once a month, water could be secured from the pump five hundred feet away, but for the rest of the time it was necessary to haul it in large milk cans from a pump two miles away. The family of five was living in a tent nine feet wide and fifteen feet long. The canvas was dirty; many holes had been patched, but it was not waterproof, and during the storm just before the visit the beds had become wet. Pieces of carpet had been placed along the walls to keep out the wind. The earth had been swept, and carpets, so worn and thin they looked like the ground itself, had been put down. At one end of the tent was a screen door with a canvas curtain. In the tent were two beds crowded up against each other. The other furnishings consisted of a wood stove, a rocking chair and a table made from boxes. A kitchen built of pieces of sheet iron and canvas had been added to the tent, but the rain was pouring in through the cracks. The mattresses on the beds were home-made, gray and lumpy. The beds had no sheets. One bed had one pair of thin blankets and on each bed was a heavy "pieced" quilt. Two kerosene lamps were on the table. A bright-colored calendar was stuck on the wall. A line extending the full length of the tent was used as a clothesline. The mother wore a sleeveless cotton dress and was shivering with the cold. The two little girls wore sweaters, but their noses were running, their faces dirty. The mother said they were all recovering from colds. The baby was in one of the beds with a quilt piled around him, and cheesecloth protecting his face from the many flies.—From *Transients in California,* a study compiled by the Division of Special Surveys and Studies of the California Relief Administration, and released in August 1936.]



LUDWIG

Helen Ludwig

"The house we rented in Los Angeles cost twelve dollars a month. She was pretty happy then, living in a house. (She wasn't two yet when the drought dried us off the farm back home.) She had a lot of fun turning the electric lights on and off and running water from the faucets in the sink.

"I got a job in the oil fields, and we told her she could go to school pretty soon. She liked that and spent almost all the time talking about when she would start going. She tried to spell out words on the sign boards, and looked in all the store windows for pencil-boxes and slates and things. She asked if all the kids that went to school wore shoes. I said, 'I think so.'

"But the job at the oil fields lasted only a few days. I'd kind of lost my strength somehow since we left the farm and I let a pipe slip. I didn't blame them much for canning me—you've got to be pretty strong to work around the fields—but I was discouraged. It scares you when you find you're not as strong as you think you are. I guess it was because I didn't get over a stroke of sun I got in the cotton fields, and you don't eat any too regular following the crops. Moving from place to place all the time takes a lot of gas and oil, and while waiting for the crops to ripen you have to keep on eating.

"We waited too long trying to find another job—I guess mostly because she didn't want to leave the little house and go to the fields again. So when we reached the Valley, we didn't have money to rent a place to live.

"It was pretty hot on the way down, and she got sick and threw up a lot. She didn't complain though. She just laid her head against her mother's shoulder and looked out at the desert going by. There wasn't any place for her to lie down, because the back of the car was filled up with all our junk. Maybe the exhaust from the car had something to do with it; the manifold gaskets were leaking but I was afraid to tighten the nuts any more for fear of twisting off a bolt.

"She cried the first night we were in Imperial. She was asleep when we found a place to stop. It was an old shanty, beside an irrigation ditch, made out of brush and paper cartons woven together. She was asleep when we found the place—and when she woke up, we had her lying on the mattress in the shanty. The wind was blowing and rattling the brush, and the candle was flickering and making shadows on the walls. She liked nice things even though she was little, and the place scared her. When we told her it was only the weeds making the noise, she stopped crying, but she wouldn't eat anything, and all night she kept crying in her sleep that the weeds were getting her.

"After that winter she never was the same again; she didn't sing and dance any, and she

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didn't laugh very much. Her face got old-looking, and her lips and under her eyes got kind of blue. She began talking c' er, too; about jobs and groceries and things. She seemed to forget she was a little kid.

[In Imperial County, many families were found camping out by the side of irrigation ditches, with little or no shelter. One such family consisted of the father, mother, and eight children; the father hoped there would be some work in the valley later in the year. The mother had tuberculosis and pellagra, and it was because of her health that the family came to California. One of the children had active tuberculosis. The family had no home but a 1921 Ford. The mother was trying to chop some wood for the fire. The barefooted children, scantily clad, played on the ground which was covered with cantaloupe husks.

[A meat and vegetable stew was being cooked in a large, rusty tin can over a grate supported by four other cans. A cupboard and a table had been constructed of boxes. There were no toilet facilities, nature's needs being attended to behind bushes. Some water was brought from the ice plant in El Centro for drinking purposes, but for cooking and washing, water from the irrigation ditch was used. The family had been sleeping on the ground. The blankets were kept during the daytime in the car. There was no possible shelter. The night after this visit was made, there was a heavy rainfall. This family said they had been accustomed to a better standard of living in the East. The mother told the worker on the survey that she had been known as the best housekeeper in her home town.—From *Transients in California.*]

"It was pretty tough on her that winter. The field hands were making only a few dollars a week, and some days we didn't have much but bread and lettuce to eat. She didn't complain though. Sometimes she'd forget, when she was playing with the other kids, and run in and ask for bread and butter and jelly. Then she'd look kind of embarrassed and say, 'I mean just anything to eat, mother.' She understood pretty well for a little kid.

"Along towards spring she caught cold after a rain that soaked through the wall of the shanty. We were scared because her chest was hurting. We didn't have anything to put on it but onion juice and lard. We took her to the doctor in town. He said she was all right except she ought to have more milk, and eggs, and orange juice, and she should have hot mush every morning. He charged us two dollars. I made only four that week, so seeing him didn't do much good.

"After that the health officers came and told everybody they had to get out of camp because one of the kids had caught some contagious disease. They didn't tell us where to go, but we had to get out, so we started north for the spring oranges.

"In the orange groves I made enough to get a tent, and an army cot for her to sleep on. She was getting thinner, and the blue under her eyes was getting deeper. Pretty soon she couldn't walk. I put her in the car and took her to the county hospital. They asked, 'Is this an emergency case?' I said, 'I don't know.' They said, 'Is she hurt?' I said, 'No, she is sick.' They asked, 'Who is your doctor—who sent you here?' I told them 'We haven't got any, we just came.' They said, 'We can accept only emergency cases without a doctor's orders.'

"On the way back she asked, 'Am I going to die?' I said, 'No, you are going to get well and go to school.' She smiled at me and said, 'When I go to school I can have shoes, can't I?' I said, 'Yes.'

[For many years the laws of California provided that county supervisors should be responsible for the relief of n[illegible]ons who had lived a year in the state an[illegible]e months in the county, but in 1931 this law was changed to provide that the county need care only for those who had been three years in the state and a year in the county, and who during this time, had not received relief. Thus, all the newcomers were excluded from public aid, including medical care in the county hospitals or clinics.—From *Transients in California.*]

"I sat on the ground beside her cot and told her stories on the days when I wasn't working; but when she got sicker I'd forget to talk and just sit looking at her. I went to the library to get books to read to her. They asked me for my address and telephone number. When I told them we lived in a tent, they said 'We must have a deposit.' I stole books by putting them inside my shirt while they thought I was reading.

"She liked to have me read stories about kids. While I was reading she would get color in her cheeks and look almost well again. Once in a while she would smile a little.

"Then she died.

"I carried her in my arms to the hospital. I forgot about the car. She was very small.

"They said, 'What is the matter with her now?' I told them, 'She is dead.'

"They said, 'Oh!'

"They called for a stretcher and took her away.

"When we looked at her in the coffin, they had made her lips smile. They had put a new dress on her.

"There was a preacher there. He looked at me and said, 'She is with God.'

"There was a lady with him. She said, 'Poor little thing, it is all for the best.'

"I felt through the covers they had over her. They had put shoes on her feet."

★ ★ ★

Sunday: Outskirts of Knoxville, Tenn.

There, in the earliest and chary spring, the
dogwood flowers.

Unharnessed in the friendly sunday air
By the red brambles, on the river bluffs,
Clerks and their choices pair.

Thrive by, not near, masked all away by
shrub and juniper,
The ford v eight, racing the chevrolet.

They can not trouble her:

Her breasts, helped open from the afforded
lace,
Lie like a peaceful lake;
And on his mouth she breaks her gentle-
ness:

Oh, wave them awake!

They are not of the birds. Such innocence
Brings us whole to break us only.
Theirs are not happy words.

We that are human cannot hope.
Our tenderest joys oblige us most.
No chain so cuts the bone; and sweetest
silk most shrewdly strangles.

How this must end, that now please love
were ended,
In kitchens, bedfights, silences, women's-
pages,
Sickness of heart before goldlettered doors,
Stale flesh, hard collars, agony in antiseptic
corridors,
Spankings, remonstrances, fishing trips, or-
ange juice,
Policies, incapacities, a chevrolet,
Scorn of their children, kind contempt ex-
changed,
Recalls, tears, second honeymoons, pity,
Shouted corrections of missed syllables,
Hot water bags, gallstones, falls down
stairs,
Stammerings, soft foods, confusion of per-
sonalities,
Oldfashioned christmasses, suspicious of
theft,
Arrangements with morticians taken care
of by sons in law,
Small rooms beneath the gables of brick
bungalows,
The tumbler smashed, the glance between
daughter and husband,
The empty body in the lonely bed
And, in the empty concrete porch, blown
ash
Grandchildren wandering the betraying
sun

Now, on the winsome crumbling shelves of
the horror
God show, God blind these children!

JAMES AGEE.

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READERS' FORUM

Sidelights at the Salzburg music festival—A self-confessed letter-writer files a dissent

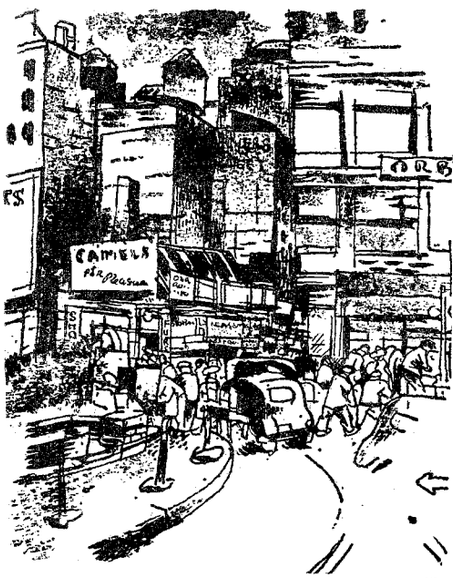
TO THE NEW MASSES:

● Salzburg, Austria, is the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. It is an incredibly picturesque town situated in the midst of compelling mountains and overcast with a moody, variable sky. It is only natural, therefore, that it should have become the setting for the annual musical and dramatic performances known as the Salzburg Festival, which is distinguished by the patronage of the wealthiest drama and music lovers in the world (the prohibitive prices automatically exclude from the audiences any natives who might unwittingly have desired to participate in their own festival). If, by day, a casual observer should mistake a visitor for a Salzburger (the costumes of the natives are charming and have been almost universally adopted by the smoothly marcelled and manicured *Ausländer*), at night the line of demarcation becomes only too evident. Then the natives fill the street opposite the Festspielhaus (a large, new, but architecturally more than undistinguished building) and quietly and wistfully regard the procession of very elegantly groomed ladies and gentlemen who come to hear Toscanini or Bruno Walter interpret Mozart or Glück, or to watch one of Max Reinhardt's spectacles unfold itself, but also to be conspicuously present at one of the most fashionable "cultural" events of the season. Soft-spoken native children have learned to approach celebrities and ask timidly for autographs.

My friend and I sat in a cheap restaurant in Salzburg, a sort of local adaptation of the Automat. Tourists never come here, and so the men who were sitting or standing about eyed us curiously. Two handsome, blond, young Austrians seated near us seemed eager to converse. After a few preliminaries and despite our halting German, we steered the conversation into serious channels. I asked the young men what work they did. The more spirited one informed me that unfortunately they had been unemployed for two years. "Salzburg," he said, "looks like a very beautiful town to visitors, but we are very poor here. Wages for those who have work are as low as sixty groschen (twelve cents) an hour." I asked if there were any trade unions in Salzburg and was told that they were *"streng verboten."* I suggested that perhaps in Vienna it would be easier to find work and was told that conditions were worse there. "Here, at least, we sometimes get a little work on the land." I asked the men about their political convictions and was told by one that he was not very interested in politics. What he wanted was an opportunity to make a living and nothing more.

The other said that he rather favored Hitler and added that there are a great many Austrians who have begun to look to Hitler for that degree of security which the present Austrian regime seemed incapable of providing. But when I said that most of us in America had no use either for Hitler or for any fascist dictator, the men were not offended. Rather they were eager for us to tell them what we, in America, valued—as though they had once known but had forgotten. And indeed, when I enumerated some of the privileges which we enjoy in a democracy, stressing particularly the advantages of the trade union as a weapon for improving the conditions of working-men, the same man who had spoken for Hitler, said wistfully that he had been a Social-Democrat before the dictatorship. When I added that Hitler had made slaves of German workers as the Austrian dictatorship had of Austrian workers, by destroying their trade unions, these Austrian workers thoughtfully nodded agreement. As we conversed my eye rested upon a poster, and I was reminded that a few blocks away there was another world where it was festival time in Salzburg and wealthy foreigners were disporting gaily.

Salzburg, Austria. LIZA KRAITZ.



John Holiker

Author Saroyan Comes Back

TO THE NEW MASSES:

● A time like the present is one in which almost any man hesitates to imagine anything he is doing (continuously, I mean, from one established point in his life to the end of it) is of the slightest importance. (Yesterday while drinking a cup of coffee, I read that 15,000 human beings have been destroyed in about seven days in the war in China.) A writer's best subject has always been one man, and death to one man has always been a writer's most ultimate and lofty theme, but when 15,000 men are destroyed in less time than it takes the average writer to write one short story, a writer (if he reads the newspapers or listens to the radio) is left with a feeling of despair for people or despair for art, but not for both, unless the writer is inwardly sick and has been for some time. The despair I feel now, as usual, is despair for art, even though I know its true power, its true importance, and the urgency of its continuance, even if it is poor art, as it is today all over the world. Poor, I mean, in the sense that it is never great and unbalanced at the same time.

For this reason, I hesitate to make an issue of some of the comments of Robert M. Coates in his review [issue of August 31] of my latest book, *Little Children.*

At the same time I feel that not to accept and follow through the impulse I feel to say what I have to say would make me guilty of that kind of intellectual and moral inertia which, in significant and articulate human beings, has been partly responsible for the maintenance of needless error, violence, and waste in the behavior of great living masses. Not to speak, I mean, out of an honest impulse, on any theme, however seemingly inconsequential, is, I believe, a kind of passive selfishness essentially criminal, and essentially too characteristic of the artist who is politically unbiased and yet deeply concerned with the fate of human beings. The biased speak often enough, and lately even act, for which I have only the profoundest respect and admiration. The recent performances of André Malraux, Ralph Bates, Ernest Hemingway (and others, several of them now dead), as artists, zealots, and human beings, are in the noblest sense performances of heroism. I know no man can be without bias, least of all myself, but some demand the right to remain politically unbiased, on the ground (I speak for myself) that they do not understand thoroughly enough what it is all about. In the midst of universal political bias, absolute faith, and almost vicious sincerity, I should like to admit that, so far as a political method of achieving order is concerned, I am unable to make a decision, for the reason that in making a decision I should become a member of a force whose opponents include too many human beings who are helpless and who are the subject of literature, and whose submission becomes the object of whatever force I join. I do not believe any group, however small, unless it is integrated by a criminal impulse, which is unlikely, deserves to be beaten into submission by any other force, however noble its impulse. These are all people, right or wrong, and they are all the subject of our art. I should not like to contribute in any way to the premature ending of any of their lives. At the same time I insist that I am not, as some would be apt to charge, sitting on a fence, living in an ivory tower, turning my back on reality, or otherwise ignoring the most vital issues of our time. I am simply trying my best to continue honestly to function as a human being of good will and as an artist whose basic desire is to point out error, emphasize truth and dignity, and to assist in the achievement and maintenance of the most equitable kind of order.

All this is by way of reply to Mr. Coates's belief (brought to expression, most likely, by his present political bias, and because he was doing his review for your magazine) that I need more direction, philosophic and artistic, in my aim. (It does not bring into the issue any of the more classic and universal intentions of art, at any time, war or peace, as for instance the intention to isolate and focus attention on purity, innocence, innate health, natural humor, and that amazing, inevitable, and instinctive capacity for renewal in the spirit of man, which is so fresh and delightful in the infant of our kind [the subject of my latest book], and which, so far, has never been destroyed by politics, war, disease, fire, flood, earthquake, the wrath of God, or the very opposite of this capacity in man himself.) That would be an appropriate discussion for a time unlike the present, and I can wait for the arrival of that time.

In my opinion I have had direction in my aim from the outset, and my enemy has been, if the most obvious, certainly the most worthy of attack, and if those who have troubled to read my stuff have failed to appreciate this truth, the fault is not mine. (Which accounts in part for my writing to any writer or editor who mentions my name or work in his newspaper, magazine, or column.)

New York. WILLIAM SAROYAN.

Reviewer Coates Replies

TO THE NEW MASSES:

● Mr. Saroyan misunderstood my intention in the passage he quotes from my review. I believe with him that the artist can function in many ways in revolutionary or other struggles, and active participation in politics or in warfare is only one of them. At least, we all say so, and it's usually very comforting.

What I meant, and what I said (though in the pompous way all us critics have to use) was concerned with all this only as it affects his way of writing. You can't read many of Saroyan's stories without feeling that he picks his subjects too much at random and too sentimentally; fails to "place" them enough with respect to their human and artistic implications; and so, when he writes them, misses a lot of chances.

It's a hell of a subject to make cracks about, but I can't help feeling that he hasn't yet digested either that cup of coffee or the fifteen thousand Chinese.

Gaylordsville, Conn. ROBERT M. COATES.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

An anthology of W.P.A. creative writing—Those finks again—An apologia for nationalism

WHEN the Works Progress Administration set up the Federal Writers' Project, it was with the professed intention of helping creative writers, who as a class have never fared well and whose situation during the depression, with magazines failing and book publishers curtailing their lists, was a particularly cruel one. Unfortunately, the W.P.A. made no provision for direct publication of creative work, and its aid to poets and novelists was of an oblique kind. These writers were obliged to drudge away at the tiresome compilation of guide books, a slightly glorified job of cataloguing. They were, however, drawing a small salary, and this enabled them to eat—at least sparingly—while they employed their spare time on endeavors closer to their hearts.

From the outset, the projects were eyed with suspicion by chambers of commerce and other vigilant heresy-hunters. A guide to the Ozarks was squelched by the Springfield, Mo., Chamber of Commerce, because it intimated that some Ozarkians do not speak the purest English and some of them live in cabins. In the words of the state W.P.A. director, who thoroughly approved of the chamber's complaint, the primary and paramount object of the guide books should be to attract buyers of farms. Only very recently, a tremendous hullabaloo resounded from cultured Boston, where the Massachusetts state guide book was threatened with suppression by the governor, who demanded that the culprits who had "maliciously besmirched" the state be dismissed. What particularly aroused the governor's ire was a reference to Sacco and Vanzetti. The only hope for any vital affirmation in the state guides is in the restoration of complete authority to the Washington office, and this seems at the moment a remote possibility.

*American Stuff** is intended as a demonstration of what sort of stuff the federal writers have in them, and, since it was not written on project time and was not published under project auspices, the authors presumably have been allowed a great deal more leeway than is possible in the official publications, which bear sad scars of the emasculating knives of witch-hunters. The anthology contains short stories, sketches, excerpts from novels, essays, folk lore, and verse, supplemented by some prints borrowed from the Federal Art Project. Almost without exception, the work of the lesser known contributors is superior to that of the several established authors who are represented. Too often the veterans' offerings exude the odor of mothballs and are marked with the pallor usually induced by long burial in dark corners of trunks. Claude McKay apostrophizes the "Ho Moon, Sad Moon," while Harry Kemp redeems his conventional conception of "Wind of Change" with a final affirmative stanza. Strangely enough, Harris Dickson, a Dixie wheelhorse who habitually portrays the Negro as a cringing Uncle Tom or an amiable, indolent, and imbecile Rastus, and who recently published a thoroughly reactionary book about King Cotton, has contributed an excellent selection of Negro folk sayings.

The most successful material in the book is found in the sketches and short stories. Richard Wright's "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow," an autobiographical sketch, easily surpasses others of its genre. It deals poignantly with the question of just how far a "good nigger" (in the southern chauvinist's phrase) may go before he earns the fatal stigma of a "bad nigger." J. S. Balch's "Beedlebugs" emerges with more honors than any other short story. A windy, rainy night, an automobile smash-up, cops, whores, and sit-down strikers figure in a tale related with salty, pungent phrase and admirable economy. Jerre Mangione's "Man with the Cracked Derby" and Ivan Sandrof's "Just for Fun" are specimens of the superior variety of proletarian short story the *Anvil, Blast,* and the then flourishing crop of "little" magazines published in 1934. Too few of these have found their way into print since. Only a few of the fiction selections are trivial, derivative, painfully whimsical, or "arty." Eluard Luchell McDaniel's delightfully artless style may be sampled to better advantage in the February 1935 issue of *Story,* but his "Bumming in California" here included has the fine racy flavor of a Negro hobo's unstudied conversation beside a bonfire of railroad ties.

Julio Girona

The poetry section is perhaps the weakest in the volume. Edward Bjorkman's "Old Barham on Democracy" becomes inordinarily wearisome and didactic, and Robert B. Hutchinson's "Canzone: So Seeing This Manner" springs seven classic allusions in one sonnet. The Negro work songs and the folk songs offer a welcome contrast to the traditional laments, roundelays, and impressionistic verse.

The jacket announces that this material has been "selected for artistic excellence or simply to represent the range of interests covered." The range of interests is indeed wide, and the anthology as a cross-section of American literature and life is more than a little successful. Dr. B. A. Botkin of the University of Oklahoma edited for several years his vital "regional miscellany" *Folk-Say,* and Scribner's published *Life in the United States* a few years ago. Both of these dealt with vital aspects of the American scene with a candor new to contemporary letters, a forthrightness that probed beyond the picturesque and quaint minutiæ which ordinarily supply grist for the regionalist's mill and into the troublesome question of man's daily bread—of those who sow but seldom reap. *American Stuff* has been edited with the idea of imparting some conception of the varied talents at work on the Federal Writers' Projects, talents which are as diverse as Eluard Luchell McDaniel's on the one hand and Travis Hoke's on the other. Hoke, a professional writer, enlists the practiced funny man's art in an effort to make his "Sitwell Improved Funnoiser" a hilarious piece, but it falls pretty flat. McDaniel's humor gushes as unaffectedly as a mountain spring, his misspelling even adding to the effect. *Folk-Say* and *Life in the United States* were edited with an explicitness of purpose perhaps impossible for the compilers of *American Stuff,* and the latter volume's very catholicity is responsible for much of its weakness as a collection of social significance. It is only necessary to compare Leon Dorais's timely and assuredly "American stuff" story "Mama, the Man Is Standing There" or Ida Faye Sachs's moving "Fair Afternoon" with Dorothy Van Ghent's pedantic essay, "Gertrude Stein and the Solid World." Interest in Miss Stein, whipped up by her vaudeville stunts of two or three years ago, is scarcely enough to warrant this usurpation of a great deal of space that might have been used to much greater advantage.

What *American Stuff* does indubitably demonstrate is that there are numbered among the workers of the Federal Writers' Projects many nimble creative minds that need some

* AMERICAN STUFF, *An Anthology of Prose and Verse,* by Members of the Federal Writers' Project, with Sixteen Prints by the Federal Arts Project. Viking Press. $2.

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other outlet than dust-dry tomes for the guidance of tourists and the delectation and glorification of chambers of commerce.

JACK CONROY.

Arms and the Manufacturer

SPY OVERHEAD: THE STORY OF INDUSTRIAL ESPIONAGE, *by Clinch Calkins. Harcourt, Brace.* $2.50.

THE gentlest of arts, letter writing, bids fair to come into its own again—at least if one can judge by the correspondence of the spies, hookers, and munitions salesmen whose "reports" lend added color to Clinch Calkins's *Spy Overhead.* "Every village here has gone gun-crazy, and the only way gas can be sold now in the future [sic] will be with machine guns," writes Mr. Ignatius McCarthy during a California cannery strike. And again when he is explaining his work to the home office, the Lake Erie Chemical Co. at Cleveland, O., "I have about eight or ten invitations a month to speak at various clubs, lodges, and even high schools, but I only take those engagements I can't very well get out of taking. Near the end of the month I must talk before a large gathering of Odd Fellows at Stockton. You have to do a lot of things out here to sell gas."

Mr. McCarthy did them gladly, even such shooting as circumstances dictated. With becoming regard for the proprieties, he had himself deputized before writing the home office: "I have a few remarks to make (to local police) at the beginning to the effect that our whole desire is to coöperate . . . but that the only way I can take active part in any riots is as a special officer or deputy sheriff and not as a representative of the company. This is a crack at Quinn who allowed Rausch to shoot at will without any control. Rausch shot a fellow in the face with a long-range shell (gas) and then asked the officers witnessing the same not to say that he did it. I was on the waterfront as a special police officer. . . . You might as well insist on this policy in other parts of the country."

Despite Mr. McCarthy's high entertainment value, he does not monopolize the stage—the competition is too fierce. Miss Calkins, who had access to the files of the LaFollette Committee, has chosen her material so well and presented it with such skill that *Spy Overhead* is at once a source book of employer-violence and a dramatic interpretation of hidden events that have shaped labor history. Indeed, it is the penetrating insight Miss Calkins displays that gives this book real importance. In presenting facts that are appalling by themselves, the author never misses their relation to the labor scene and their effect on the development of working-class solidarity. Thus in the first chapter, tracing the growth of labor organization, she says: "The volatile layer of American life which has stood like a blanket of fog between the wage-earner and his claim to a share in industrial government lies in the wide American group of small property owners and small business men, annually liquidated downwards in great numbers, but occasionally vaporized to higher clouds of glory. It is in this group of the near-successful that hope springs like winter wheat. Later were added to them the small stock-holders, salaried executives, and those white-collared workers who have only lately begun to suspect their economic identity with those who work for a wage. These mobile groups have prevented the labor movement from taking on the appearance of the class struggle which at base it has been."

Jack Luca

"If it was up to me, that strike would have been busted long ago!"

Whether it is a letter from Governor Hoffman to the Radio Corporation of America recommending a detective agency for strike purposes; the meeching evidence of some fink like Michael Casey who said, "A scab and a strikebreaker is different. A strikebreaker doesn't want anybody's job"; or Paul Litchfield, president of Goodyear, writhing under examination by Senator LaFollette, Miss Calkins uses each incident with telling effect. The rounded picture is a social document of deep significance.

Close students of labor's struggle to organize will find plenty of fresh facts in *Spy Overhead.* The list of corporations that pass in review reads like a blue book of American industry. And the grim record of anti-union campaigns that range from threats of discharge to open murder will shock even the most impervious reader of detective fiction. But it is well disposed liberals inclined to look askance at militant labor policies, who need to read this book most carefully. They and that "volatile layer of American life," the uneasy middle class, will gain a new conception of business mores and see for themselves the clearly marked path of labor's progress.

WILLIAM B. SMITH.

Kropotkin's Uneasy Ghost

NATIONALISM AND CULTURE, *by Rudolf Rocker. Covici-Friede.* $3.50.

RUDOLF ROCKER is a veteran "libertarian socialist"—in other words, an anarchist. His book purports to be a history of cultural development in its relation to political structures and is an attempt to show that the national state, as the highest form of political organization, is most inimical to creative intellectual activity. Italy and Germany are given

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as examples of acute state repression of culture as well as—with the customary obsession of anarchist thinkers against Marxism—the Soviet Union. A theory of the advantages of federalist social organization is also outlined, which Bertrand Russell, in a blurb, considers an important contribution to political philosophy, but which turns out to be a rehash of the completely discredited ideas of Proudhon, the ideologist of the small business man.

Milt Groth

Briefly, Rocker's thesis is that historical events are not subject to necessity as are natural events, chance having been introduced by the human will, whose operations are unpredictable. All economic and political trends are nothing but results of this will, whose acute form, to which matter and spirit bow, is the will to power. And the will to power finds its supreme expression in the state, oppressor of humanity. Culture withers under this evil, which can be done away with only by a covenant of free individuals and municipalities in accord with the principles of reason and human nature.

And how is this federation to be achieved? Very simply. Mankind will read the classics of libertarian socialism, such as Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, etc. It will then see that the modern state is nothing but an illusion, and that the class struggle is just the result of the tyranny of authority. What is more easy than to abolish that authority by dispelling the illusion? Down with the state! Presto, the period of enlightenment begins. Man, whose nature, for some reason or other, has remained constant and in bondage to various superstitions since prehistoric times, suddenly becomes the master of his own fate. He is now able to start a grocery store and to write beautiful poetry to his heart's content, protected by contracts entered into with similarly liberated and broad-minded individuals. Unheard of cultural glories are taken for granted in this paradise of freedom.

It is appropriate that this naïve scrap book in which history appears as a series of moral object lessons, usually dateless, should come out some months after the uprising in Barcelona. For, apart from its interesting anecdotes, its outline of the sociological conceptions of great men of the past, and its illuminating quotations and refutation of the race and culture theories of fascism, it is a brief for that very ideology which was reduced to absurdity by the events of last May.

Let us look at the results of Rocker's theory of the relation of culture to the state, as he applies it to Greece. As culture and the state flourish in inverse proportion to one another, the high development of Greek art must be explained by the lack of true political consciousness on that peninsula. Even the Persian invasion could not unite the Greek cities. Their help to one another at times resembled nothing more than sabotage. And this is held up for our approbation! The fact that the Greeks as well as Greek culture, were in danger of more than decline does not occur to Rocker.

Nor the secondary question—how is the city-state any less tyrannous to its oppressed classes than the state as a nation? For a science of economic and social relations we have substituted a mythology of smallness as a hero. This is the libertarian fetish of federation which paralyzed the Aragon front for more than a year and deceived groups of anarchist workers into raising arms against their own government. Sooner a Spain dismembered by Italy, Germany, and Franco than Catalonia united to Valencia by the authority of the People's Front.

Perhaps Rocker would like to apply his theory to China, too. It would read something like this. The national unification of China is the greatest disaster which could befall her. Nothing could be worse than that she should be in a position to resist Japan, because then all the intellectual advantages of hundreds of years of feudal separatism would be destroyed.

Rocker's book shows that anarchist thinkers have added nothing to their understanding of the causes of political oppression, to their hankering for archaic political structures by which the accomplishment of the proletarian revolution would be rendered doubly difficult, to their useless abstract conception of human nature, and to their radiant but magical dream of the destruction of the state by decree. They have added nothing new but hatred of the Soviet Union, by which their political obscurantism and the ultimately reactionary character of their philosophy are crystallized. No wonder the bourgeois columnists hailed the tragic mistake of the anarchist workers in Barcelona as a sign of the "individualistic spirit of Spain." These anarchist thinkers are the modern Greeks bearing compliments.

CLARENCE WEINSTOCK.

Thomas Mann's Dualism

DIALECTICS, No. 2. *The Critics Group.* 10c.

THE main item in the second number of *Dialectics* is an article on "The Dialectical Development of Thomas Mann," by the Soviet critic Eugene Lundberg. The issue also contains several shorter pieces: a selected bibliography on dialectical materialism, a "tentative" outline of "The Marxist Approach to Art," by Milton W. Brown, and a brief reply by Feuchtwanger to Gide's recent strictures against the Soviet Union. Of special interest is the essay by Lundberg, which illustrates a certain difficulty in recent criticism of Mann's work. Left-wing criticism of Mann has, in some cases, shifted from complete rejection of his earlier defense of the *Kultur*-war and his preoccupation with disease and decay to a tenuous acceptance of the strong anti-fascist trend of his later work. While hailing Mann's political development, some critics remain distrustful of his mythical expression, such as is contained in *Joseph and His Brethren,* holding that it continues the earlier decadent tendency.

Lundberg's essay emphasizes this dualism in Mann. He denies that there is a central motif in Mann's work. He maintains that there are two Mann personalities: one carries out a sound realistic technique, while the other employs a highly symbolical approach; the one is lost in a kind of "bottomless pit" of æsthetics and metaphysics, while the other has awakened to politics.

For a Marxist critic this is a daring thesis. To deny that some unifying element exists, however complex the whole pattern may be, is to run counter to the principle of continuity, leaving the door open to psychoanalytical obscurantism and mystical speculation about split personalities. Likewise, to hold that there is a sharp diremption between Mann's art and politics is to repudiate historical materialism.

Lundberg's second central criticism of Mann is that the biological rather than the social category is in the foreground of his work, the disintegrating process being *caused* by physical debility. This criticism presupposes a literal interpretation of Mann's biological emphasis. But Mann is a highly symbolical artist. In writing about bourgeois art and culture around the war period, Mann describes the manifestations of their ailment both within and without (biologically).

Lundberg's essay does well to show the one-sidedness of the thesis, according to which Mann is primarily the depicter of western decay, of which he himself is a melancholic product. What prevents Mann from representing such simple unity is the element of "irony" in his work, which is focused toward envisaging "the other side." However, his polar perspective does not entail trends that are mutually exclusive.

To be sure, Thomas Mann's *Weltanschauung* as a whole offers less than the immediate exigencies the social situation requires. On the other hand, the very fact of Mann's sustained concern with the human in its final totality, bound up, as it is, with the "growth" of his political emphasis, is an indication that his anti-fascist and socialist allegiance will not be affected by spurious fluctuations in the social graph.

HARRY SLOCHOWER.

Brief Reviews

DOCTORS, DOLLARS, AND DISEASE, *by William Trufant Foster. Public Affairs Committee.* 10c.

The American people spend over three billion dollars a year for medical care—yet, in any one year, only one person out of fifteen receives much needed hospital attention, while out of ten school children, nine have decayed teeth or other diseases of the mouth. This is true despite the fact that there are in the United States one million medically trained people, seven thousand hospitals with about one million beds, eight thousand clinics and outpatient departments, fifty-seven thousand drug stores, and a national network of public health departments. It is facts of this kind which were assembled by the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care after five long years of investigation. The

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reader will find a terse and instructive summary of these findings in the pamphlet by Mr. Foster. He will also find a brief analysis of the various projects for health insurance in force here and abroad—not one of which, however, can get over the hurdle set in the path of genuine medical progress by a watchful competitive society that regards private profit as the one and only incentive to social action. J. S.

SUGAR IN THE AIR, *by E. C. Large. Charles Scribner's Sons.* $2.50.

This novel about sugar, the July selection of the British Book Society, is being plugged all over town as a biting satire on big business. It is nothing of the sort. True, it is interspersed with a few ineffective jibes at industrial irrationality, but its chief criticism—hold on to your seats—is that business men are such damn fools that they quite frequently pass up an opportunity to exploit a good thing.

This profound discovery is brought out as follows: Charles Pry, a bright young chemical engineer, is retained by a phony concern to complete a process for extracting synthetic sugar from the atmosphere. Pry gives his all for the company, but he is thwarted at every point by a short-sighted board of directors who know nothing of sugar or the atmosphere. After Pry has overcome all human and physical obstacles and made "sugar from the air" a paying proposition, he is cast aside for incompetent company favorites. He takes it with chin erect and philosophizes that "come what may, the creative and constructional work of mankind must and should go on." The obvious moral is that a stout-hearted young man, aided by a resourceful and adoring mate, can soothe his inflamed sense of righteousness by laughing at it all and taking refuge in creation and service, "come what may." The writing is not "*functional . . .* simple, powerful, lean, emphatic, gleaming like steel" prose as the *Saturday Review* claims. It is lively in spots but never exceptional. The first half of the book is cluttered up with technical verbiage which even the publishers admit may not bear "expert analysis." Pass this one by.

R. H. R.

★

Recently Recommended Books

One Life, One Kopeck, by Walter Duranty. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

How to Combat Anti-Semitism in America, A Symposium. Six Prize-Winning Essays in the Contest Conducted by "Opinion." Jewish Opinion. $1.

Caste and Class in a Southern Town, by John Dollard. Yale University Press. $3.50.

The Guggenheims, by Harvey O'Connor. Covici-Friede. $3.

The Life and Death of a Spanish Town, by Elliot Paul. Random. $2.50.

Shadow on the Land, by Thomas Parran. Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.50.

Ten Million Americans Have It, by S. William Becker, M.D. Lippincott. $1.35.

Moscow, 1937: My Visit Described for My Friends, by Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking. Book Union choice. $2.

The Profits of War, by Richard Lewinsohn. Dutton. $3.

After the Genteel Tradition, edited by Malcolm Cowley. Norton. $2.75.

Home Is Where You Hang Your Childhood, by Leane Zugsmith. Random. $1.50.

Integrity: The Life of George W. Norris, by Richard L. Neuberger and Stephen B. Kahn. Vanguard. $3.

A Maverick American, by Maury Maverick. Covici-Friede. $3.

The Making of a Hero, by Nicholas Ostrovski. Dutton. $2.50.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

A magnificent Soviet film arrives—The Broadway season opens—Retrospect and prospect in the dance

CHAPAYEV, The Youth of Maxim, and *Peasants* were produced by the Lenfilm studios at Leningrad. The Soviet Union awarded their makers and the studio the Order of Lenin. Here, we raved about them and called them great. Similar praise came from the Soviet Union about another Lenfilm production called *Baltic Deputy*. A picture of high quality was expected. A film as good as the earlier prize-winners would be wonderful. But after seeing *Baltic Deputy* (Amkino), I am at a loss for adequate words of praise. We have used all of our glowing adjectives on films of lesser stature. There is nothing left to say except that this film is simply magnificent.

The cultural level of the Soviet cinema has been on a very high plane. Except for some rare cases, the films have been very simple. The best sound films on an extremely high artistic level were produced for the Soviet masses. Most films were about workers, peasants, heroes of socialism, or heroes of the revolution. *Baltic Deputy* is not only a "different" film in its artistic make-up, but it is the first Soviet film to consider the problem of the intellectual in relation to the new society. The subject-matter of the film is extremely complex. The hero is Dmitri Polezhayev, professor of botany at the University of Petrograd, doctor of natural science at the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and deputy to the Petrograd Soviet from the sailors of the Baltic fleet. (The character of Professor Polezhayev had its prototype in the actual Academician K. A. Timiryazev, a great scientist and scholar, who was a hero of the revolution, to whom this film is dedicated.)

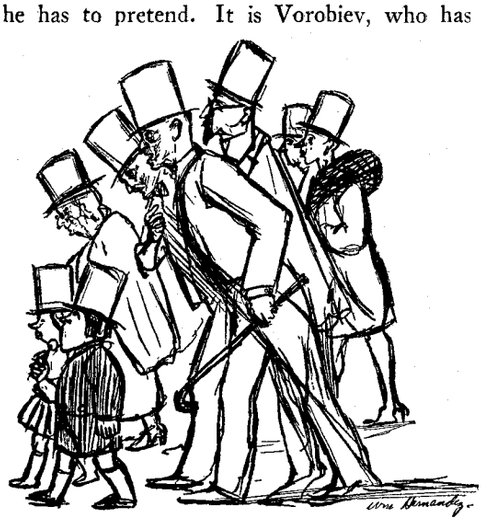
The film opens on a dismal cold rainy day in the fall of 1917. People are in line waiting for their rations of bread and herring. It is on the eve of Professor Polezhayev's seventy-fifth ıday. He has written an article in praise he Bolsheviks. His colleagues are flabbered. The professor of medicine says that he ntering his second childhood; the professor history admits that perhaps he is a great uralist, "but as a historian he's nothing." e Menshevik students refuse to take exnations under the professor on the ground t they won't give answers to "Bolshevik elings and German spies."

There are several especially interesting seences in this film. One bears on the relanship between the professor and his assistant obiev. This man considers himself a artyr to science. He and the professor are ways getting into arguments whenever they lk about anything else. He has been assoated with the professor for years and is usted. As a matter of fact, he is entrusted ith Polezhayev's manuscript in order to get to the university printer. But he is an enemy f the revolution. He feels that science will e dead under the Bolsheviks. Vorobiev tries to persuade the professor to withdraw the article he wrote for the newspaper. "I was for you when you fought with the czarist ministers, when you were driven out of the university, then I was for you . . . when they wanted to take your laboratory. For your sake I accepted everything. . . . exclusion from the university, yes, almost exile." In his high pitched and dynamic manner, Polezhayev replies, "Almost . . . almost. With you it's always 'almost'!"

Then there is the sequence in which Polezhayev speaks to a group of sailors from the Baltic fleet. We see the old man in the anteroom on the battleship. He is straightening his Prince Albert coat; he is making his last-minute notes; he trims his beard. We see the sailors, dirty with the grime of work and battle. The professor enters the room, gets up on an improvised platform. This lanky intellectual with the beautifully sensitive face says "Comrades!" and there is a burst of applause from his audience. He says:

> . I'll lecture to you as if you were my students. It it already seven years that I have been working on my book. I sit at my desk so that the plowman should find it easier to work the soil. Such geniuses of science as Faraday, Claude Bernard, Huxley, and others have long been trying to make science come down from its pedestal; free itself of the whip of obscurantism, hysteria, and to speak the language of the people. All my life I also have fought for this . . . well I will tell you about the color red . . . the foundation of the life of plants. . . .

This brings us to the next phase of the film. The table at the professor's home is set and everything is in readiness for the celebration of the completion of his manuscript, which has taken seven years' work. But no one shows up. The professor is anathema to his colleagues. His wife cannot console him. Finally there is a knock on the door. Polezhayev tells his wife to go to the piano and play something cheerful. He goes out in the foyer and closes the door behind him. He will have guests even if he has to pretend. It is Vorobiev, who has come back to make one more effort to win the professor away from the Bolsheviks. But Vorobiev is annoyed that the professor has "guests." They get into the usual argument. This time Vorobiev insults Polezhayev and is practically thrown out by the old man. The Faust ballet music stops and Polezhayev says to his wife: "Alone now, as if for good. What did I give you. . . .? The treachery of friends, loneliness in old age. Well, what can I do for you while I'm still alive?" And so they both sit down at a piano to play four-handed. This is one of the tenderest and most touching sequences that has ever been recorded on film.



First Nighters William Hernandez

But he is not alone. Bocharov, a former student who has returned from Siberia to take charge of Bolshevik propaganda, comes to the house. They talk about old times and of the future. They sing "Gaudeamus Igitur." During the night Lenin telephones to see if there is anything the professor wants and to congratulate him on his book. And so we come to the climax of the film. The sailors from the Baltic fleet elect the professor as their deputy to represent them in the Petrograd Soviet. Polezhayev, against the doctor's orders, makes the trip to speak. It is a triumphant meeting. The sailors and soldiers march off to defend the city and Polezhayev goes back to his study to keep his promise: "As long as I hold a pen, as long as my eyes decipher letters, I will defend the revolution. . . ."

It is difficult to describe the film. There is nothing startling about it. It is quiet, human, humorous, and tragic. It is as full of passion as it is lyric. There are no evidences of crude naturalism. There are no displays of formal fireworks or flashy symbolism. It is based on fact. There is an abundance of historical and human detail. The scenarists have used their history with great freedom, yet never distort the historical facts.

Baltic Deputy was directed by two young men, both members of the Young Communist League, I. Heifetz and A. Zarkhi. They have given us a film of which any director would be proud. Hollywood would be wise to examine this film very closely. Especially in the light of such productions as *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *The Life of Emile Zola.* These films, fine as they are, suffer by comparison with *Baltic Deputy.*

In all this time I have neglected to discuss the work of Nikolai Cherkassov, who portrays Professor Polezhayev-Timiryazev. If it were possible to single out the one single element in the film that contributes most to its success, it would undoubtedly be Cherkassov. American audiences have seen him before in a minor bad film by the directors of *Baltic Deputy:* a film called *Red Army Days.* For years he has been known as a specialist in eccentric roles. When you behold Polezhayev's gait, hear his voice, you will find it difficult to believe that

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the actor who endows this seventy-five-year-old professor with life is only thirty-two years old. It is not merely a trick in make-up. The books and writings of Academician Timiryazev and his biography; the facts of the revolution itself; finally the high ideological content of the scenario itself gave Cherkassov the necessary source material for the creation of one of the most memorable roles in the theater.

This film should run as long as it takes every worker, every scientist, every intellectual, to see it. PETER ELLIS.

An interesting contrast to *Baltic Deputy* in the treatment of historical material is *Firefly*, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer musical starring Jeannette MacDonald, which treats of Napoleon's invasion of Spain and the popular rising against him. This time Miss MacDonald dances a lot as well as sings (her duet partner is Allan Jones), and this, with a love-spy story, is supposed to be the main interest of the film. But the producers have missed a trick. What seems to have the most interest (at least for a large section of the audience) is the feeling of a unified people in arms resisting an aggressor. The emphasis on traditional musical comedy-melodrama material casts a pall over everything else. R. W.

THE THEATER

PROBABLY the best thing that can be said for *Virginia*, the super-musical that opened the Broadway season at Mr. Rockefeller's Center Theater, is that it is giving employment to a great many people. A minor blessing (for those who can afford it) is that it is giving to the citizenry of New York and its environs a pleasant, air-conditioned opportunity for sleep. Those are harsh words, but *Virginia* is really nothing but a long-drawn-out bore in the manner of the stage "presentations" which impede the flow of cinema at Mr. Rockefeller's other palace, the Radio City Music Hall. *Virginia* is definitely a cut below last season's soporific inhabitant of the Center, *White Horse Inn*.

Lee Simonson's mounting is fresh and vivid and by and large is the best thing about the show. There are a few details that are interesting: Laurence Stallings and Owen Davis, who did the book, have not, in treating of the rising of the American revolution in Virginia, attempted to mask its genuinely revolutionary character. The revolutionary agitator on stage has many lineaments that will suggest at once to a modern audience the revolutionary agitator of today. And twice in his speeches he brings in a matter that is largely overlooked in the popular literature on the American revolution: the fact that the revolutionary commonalty of that day included as a plank in their platform the freeing of the slaves. The best of the other details are purely fortuitous: the fire-eating, juggling, and puppet show which are incidental to a scene located at a country fair. The NEW MASSES reviewer almost missed these details, because he was greatly minded to leave at the intermission. What gave him strength to go on was a visit to the second mezzanine;

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A MARXIAN QUARTERLY

SUMMER 1937

Vol. 1 No. 4

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There, hovering over the heads of the multitude, were Hugo Gellert's murals of clenched-fist proletarians.

And now that *Virginia* has opened the Broadway season, you may want to know about some of the 180-odd other productions that have been scheduled. Among the most interesting at this distance are these:

Siege, a full-length play by Irwin Shaw (author of *Bury the Dead*) on the war in Spain.

Tortilla Flat and *Of Mice and Men,* both adapted from the novels by John Steinbeck, the first by Jack Kirkland and the second by Mr. Steinbeck. George S. Kaufman will stage *Of Mice and Man.*

Two new plays, *Golden Gloves* and *The Silent Partner,* by Clifford Odets, to be produced by the Group Theater.

Empire State, a "political fantasy" by John Erskine.

Peace Prize, a comedy by John Murray and Allen Boretz, authors of *Room Service.*

Barchester Towers, an adaptation by Charles Anthony of Trollope's classic. Expected in October.

Munitions King, by Eugene Malcolm, based on the life of Sir Basil Zaharoff.

Two new plays by Paul Green, *Star in the West* and *The Enchanted Maze.* The latter is a satire on college life, to be produced by the Group Theater secessionists, Cheryl Crawford and Lee Strasberg.

Blue Jeans, a "proletarian play" by Martin Flavin, to be staged by Chester Erskin.

The Democrats, by Melvin Levy (author of *Gold Eagle Guy*), based on the life of Thomas Jefferson and to be produced by Cheryl Crawford and Lee Strasberg.

An untitled musical by Samuel and Bella Spewack (*Boy Meets Girl*), score by Kurt Weill and lyrics by Y. E. Harburg.

I'd Rather Be Right, a musical with book by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart (*You Can't Take It with You*) and lyrics by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart (*Babes in Arms, Connecticut Yankee, Garrick Gaieties,* etc.).

Blind Man's Buff, by Ernst Toller, to be produced by Guthrie McClintic.

The Star Wagon, by Maxwell Anderson, with Burgess Meredith and Lillian Gish, to be produced by Guthrie McClintic, late September.

The Ascent of F-6, a tragedy in verse by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood.

Two new plays by Victor Wolfson, author of *Excursion.*

On the Rocks, by Bernard Shaw.

Antony and Cleopatra, with Tallulah Bankhead, Brian Aherne, and Ian Keith. December.

King Lear, adapted, staged by, and starring Orson Welles.

The Lonely Man, a "labor play" by Howard Koch.

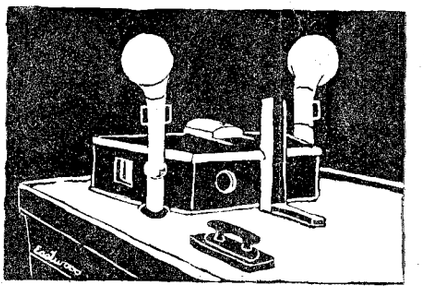
Napoleon the First, by Sidney Kingsley.

A musical by Clare Boothe, author of *The Women,* with songs by Rodgers and Hart.

Charlotte Corday, by Helen Jerome.

It is also worth noting that the new *Ziegfeld Follies* will have music by Marc Blitzstein, author of *The Cradle Will Rock,* who did the score for Joris Ivens's film *The Spanish Earth* and who has contributed music criticism to the NEW MASSES. And there is, of course, the regrettable duty of recording the death of the Theater Union, a vital force in the American theater.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.



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THE DANCE

DURING the French revolution, a committee assembled to judge the work of the French Salon decided that with men on the barricades struggling for the life of French liberty, this was no time to be occupied with sculpture. Of course, this is an understandable emotional, if not scientific, position. Despite the greatness and importance of art, headlines and bread lines, real or threatening, loom large in our daily existence and overshadow much.

From this viewpoint then, this writer sees the organizational activities of the dancers as the most important development of the past season, for any preview of the coming season requires a resumé of the one just closed. The highlights of these activities, the amalgamation of three leading dance organizations in the country; their national convention which stressed the anti-war, anti-fascist tie-up with their program for the interdependent advancement of the art and the development of the artist in the best of possible *economic* conditions; and their concert for Spain, have all been discussed in these columns before (issues of April 6, June 1, and June 8, 1937). In addition, the dancers on the W.P.A. projects staged the first theater-audience sit-down and later a hunger strike which lasted over four days.

These organizational and economic activities of the dancers, however, were no isolated phenomena; they came of a well of experience. It was this same experience—with a realistic world—that produced the five outstanding compositions of the year: Tamiris's brilliant and popular Negro songs of protest, *How Long Brethren?* which played for nine weeks to W.P.A. audiences, thereby creating a record for the modern dance theater; Martha Graham's great anti-war, anti-fascist *Chronicle* and her tremendously moving *Immediate Tragedy,* a protest against the fascist invasion of Spain and a dedication to Spain's liberty; and Anna Sokolow's two poignant satires on the philosophy and culture disseminated by Il Duce and his gang: *War Is Beautiful* and

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Façade—Esposizione Italiana which was created at Bennington, Vt.

It is difficult to recall a year more crowded with dance material of such excellence; and at no time in recent dance history have dancers been so immersed in organizational activities of a general social and economic nature. The relationship is obvious.

What the coming season holds for us is difficult to predict. New York has yet to see Martha Graham's *Immediate Tragedy* and Anna Sokolow's *Façade*. Hanya Holm is yet to be heard from with a more integrated *Trend;* we have had no word from either Charles Weidman or Doris Humphrey; and Tamiris must be reckoned with as defining new horizons.

The W.P.A. dance situation is at present in a state of flux; anything may happen. And the American Dance Association with its national affiliates is still to be heard from. Lincoln Kirstein has announced some sort of new dance theater for the modern as well as the ballet technique. All in all, there is much promise of a good, if not exciting season.

OWEN BURKE.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Daylight, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

"The Death of a Queen." Columbia Workshop presents a dramatization adapted from Hilaire Belloc's *Marie Antoinette,* Sun., Sept. 12, 7 p.m., C.B.S.

Mental Hygiene of Work. Talk by Dr. George K. Pratt, psychiatrist, Tues., Sept. 14, 5:15 p.m., C.B.S.

International Congress on Radiology. Outstanding scientists advocate a war against cancer at a round-table discussion, Tues., Sept. 14, 5:45 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Charles Edison. The assistant secretary of the navy talks on the work of that department during the U. S. Cabinet series, Wed., Sept. 15, 10:30 p.m., C.B.S.

Constitution Day Program. Addresses in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution by Senator William E. Borah, Thurs., Sept. 16, 10 p.m., N.B.C. blue; Senator Vandenberg, Fri., Sept. 17, 2 p.m., N.B.C. red; Secretary Henry A. Wallace, Fri., Sept. 17, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue; and President Roosevelt, Fri., Sept. 17, 10:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue and C.B.S.

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Dead End. The realistic drama of kids from the East Side slums comes to the screen with its impact unimpaired.

The Life of Emile Zola. Easily the best film of the year, powerful and profound.

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High, Wide and Handsome. A fairly entertaining story about the Pennsylvania oil boom with music by Jerome Kern.

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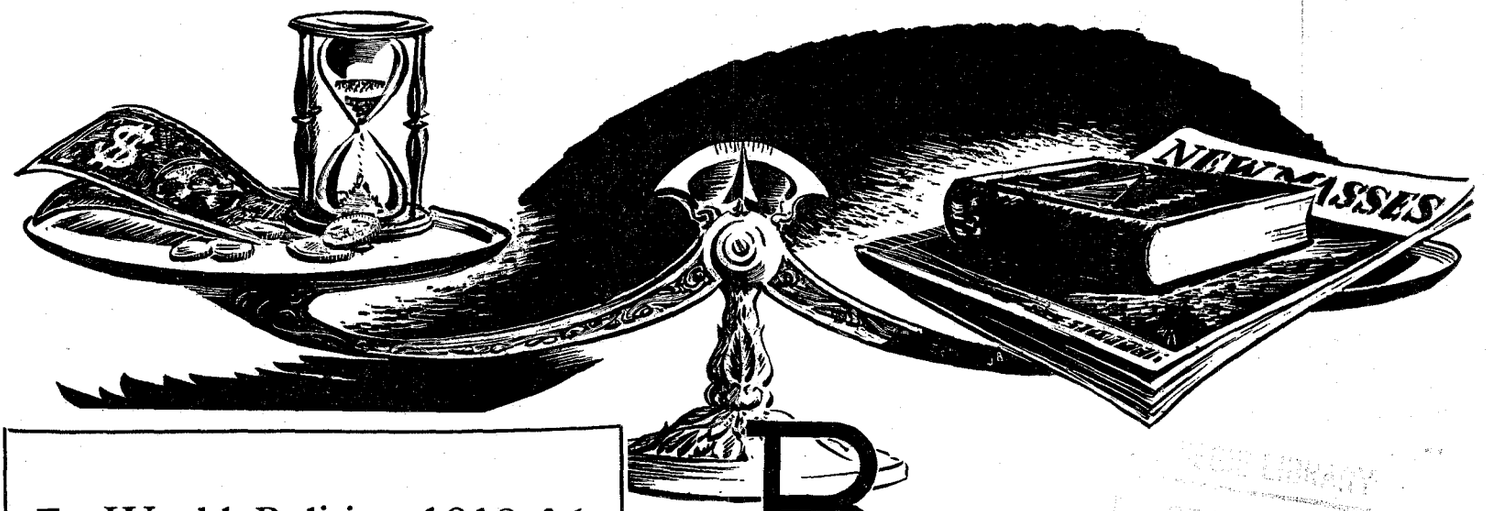

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